



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

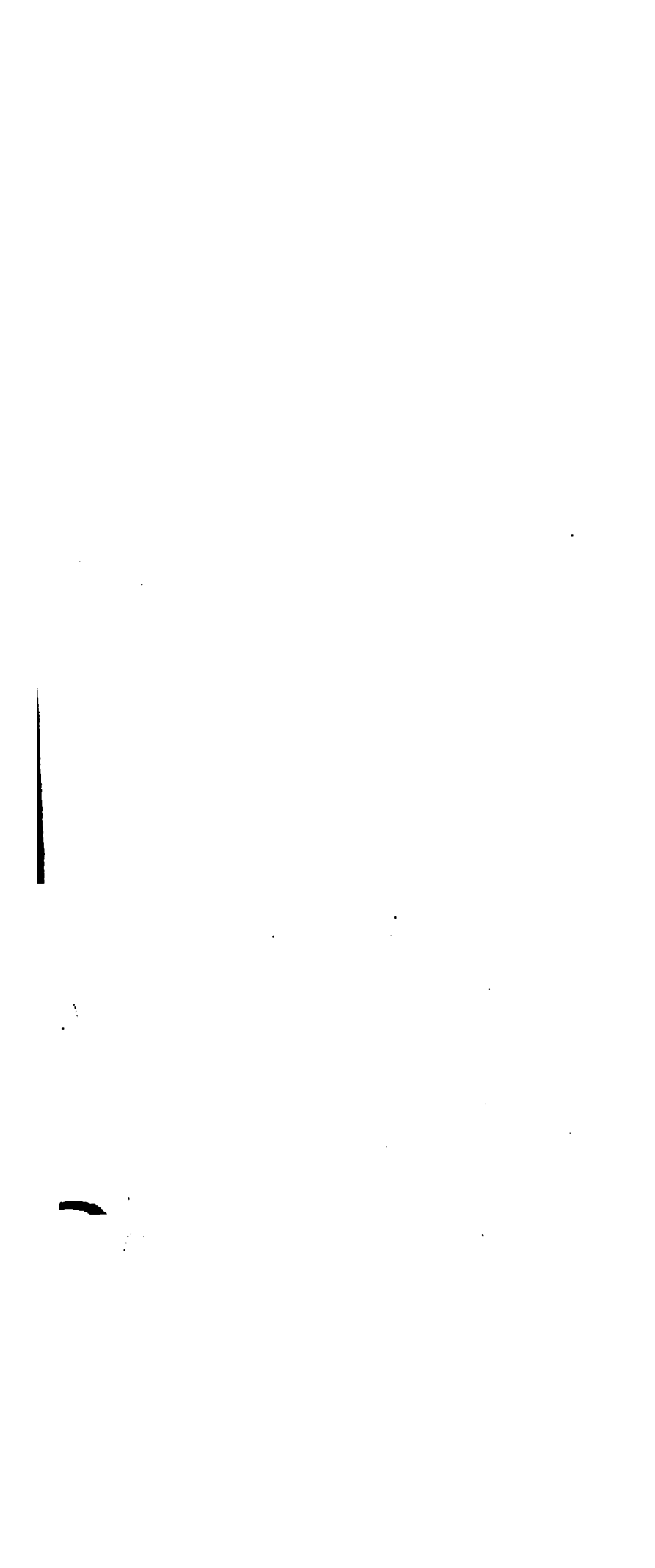
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>









HEBREW IDYLS

AND

DRAMAS.

HEBREW IDYLS

AND

DRAMAS

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN "FRASER'S MAGAZINE"

BY

M. J. CHAPMAN, M.A.

OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE



LONDON

SAUNDERS, OTLEY, AND CO.

66 BROOK STREET, W.

1866

[*All rights reserved*]

ANS 2.000

—

CONTENTS.

Hebrew Idyls.

IDYL	PAGE
I. REBEKAH	1
II. DEBORAH	13
III. RUTH	25
IV. SHEEP-SHEARING AT CARMEL	39
V. SUSANNA	49
VI. HELIODORUS	61
VII. THE BRIDE : A DRAMATIC IDYL	69
VIII. A SONG OF LOVES	93
IX. ISHMAEL, THE OUTCAST	99
X. LAMENT FOR SAUL AND JONATHAN	125
XI. TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL	131
XII. JUDITH	153

CAIN (A Monologue)	183
------------------------------	-----

Hebrew Dramas.

	PAGE
JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER	189
NOTES TO JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER	275
ESTHER	285
POSTSCRIPT	373

NOTE.



FAILING health and the pressure of necessary work have prevented the Author from bestowing upon the present book so thorough a revision as he could have desired. He has been compelled to commit to a friend the correction of the press, and blemishes have been pointed out for which, in his present inability to correct them, he must request his readers' indulgence.



PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION
OF JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

SUCCESS only can justify an attempt of this kind ;
how I have succeeded it is not for me to determine.
I have addressed myself in no irreverent spirit to
these themes.

In the treatment of a Scripture subject, I have
thought it but right, wherever I could, to make
use of Scripture language and Syrian imagery.

The history is related in the eleventh chapter of
the book of Judges. Some persons have pretended
that Jephtha's daughter was not sacrificed, and have

attempted to explain the passage away by supposing that she was devoted to celibacy. The sacred historian explicitly declares that Jephtha did with her according to his vow ; and that vow was, "If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering." He further states, that "it was a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephtha the Gileadite, four days in a year."

Josephus relates the history in the ninth chapter of the fifth book of his *Antiquities* : "But before Jephtha took the field, he prayed to God in the most fervent manner to grant him success, and made a solemn vow, that, if he proved victorious, he would offer up to him, in sacrifice, the first

living creature he should meet on his return to his family. . . .

“The war being over, Jephtha returned to his family, when, lo! instead of receiving that satisfaction he expected after so long an absence, a circumstance occurred that pierced him to the heart. On approaching his house, the first object that presented itself was his only daughter, who was flying with eager joy to receive and bid him welcome. When Jephtha saw his daughter, his soul almost sunk within him, and for some time he was unable to speak. Having a little recovered himself, he looked at her with tears trickling from his cheeks; and, after blaming her for her officiousness in coming to meet him, told her the vow he had made, by which he had obliged himself to offer her to God as a sacrifice. The innocent devotee did not appear the least alarmed at this melancholy intelligence, but with great coolness replied, that if the loss of her life would secure his honour and

the liberty of her country, she would willingly part with it. She only requested that he would indulge her with two months, that she might have an opportunity of taking a proper farewell of all her acquaintance; and that, after that time was expired, he might fulfil his vow. Her father granted her request; and, at the expiration of the two months, she was made a sacrifice, which was the consequence of the rash vow made by Jephtha, the fulfilment of which was conformable neither to law nor justice."

MAYNARD'S *Josephus*.

There are persons, however, who will presume to misconstrue and to interpret, after their own fashion, the plain language of Scripture, whenever it does violence to the imaginary character they had drawn for themselves of the Ineffable. They forget who has said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways." "I form the light, and I create darkness; I make

peace and create evil;" and yet we know that "the Lord is righteous in all His ways;" and on all occasions should we exclaim, though our understanding be darkened, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints!"

This Gileadite maiden appears to me to have been a type of the Propitiation. In the language of Solomon, she was "a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." So also was that highly favoured one, the blessed among women, when the power of the Highest overshadowed her; and, behold! a virgin conceived and bore a Son; whereupon the Spring of Salvation welled out, and the fountain of waters was opened for the cleansing of the peoples.

It is said that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephtha;" and the natural inference from the whole narrative is, that he did not sin in the matter of his vow, and that his daughter became a sacrifice for the people at that time, as a type of the Wonderful.

Ever and anon, in the history of the Church, we meet with the names of remarkable women, who, like the chaste-tree, spread sweetness around them, and were lovely in their lives; pearls of price, and blossoms of hope in times of doubt and danger; types, and signs, and revealings; instinct with graces, and filled with wisdom; whose memories skirt, at intervals, like lesser stars, the outline of times foregone, and who foreshew the coming of that glorious epoch, when the reign of justice shall be established upon the earth, and woman, as a consequence thereof, be restored to her original equality with man.

I may have failed in attempting to express the character of the Maid of Gilead; her gentleness and her devotion; her maidenly modesty and child-like simplicity, shadowing like a veil the beautiful features of pious Heroism; her willingness to die according to the very letter of her father's vow, "forasmuch as the Lord hath taken

vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon ;"—but at least a lovely vision has passed before mine eyes, and I have seen the lilies and the roses of Palestine, and a flower of exceeding beauty, Almah, the only one of her father—and am thankful.

M. J. C.

IDYL I.

REBEKAH.

IDYL I.

R E B E K A H.

A TRAIN of camels, weary with the way,
To Nahor draws, towards the close of day.
A venerable man first comes in view,
Advanced brief space before his retinue.
There by the well, kept cool with leafy shade,
Without the town a sudden halt is made ;
While men and beast the grateful freshness feel,
At his command the willing camels kneel.
A troop of damsels from the town appears,
And each a pitcher on her shoulder bears ;
For thus each evening comes the lovely choir
For water from the fountain-reservoir.
Such were the manners in that sunny clime,
In the fresh youth of that new-moulded time,

When high-born women household duties knew,
And men lived longer — though their wants were
few.

First of them all, a beauty-breathing Grace
Trips with a free step to the water-place ;
Modest and unabashed she moves along,
As one who knows no sorrow—fears no wrong.
Without remark the maiden fills her urn,
And then in silence hastens to return ;
But instant pauses, when the stranger prays
her

To give him drink, and courteously delays her ;
And from her shoulder, smiling welcome bland,
Lets down her pitcher on her lily hand.

“ Drink, sir ; and water for the camels I
Will also draw ;” nor waits for his reply,
But runs and draws, and pours it in the trough,
Till all the thirsty camels drink enough.

Meanwhile the stranger looks in silence on,
Nor speaks until her offered task is done.

Fair as a lily in the midst of thorns ;
Sweet as the fruit-tree which the wild adorns ;
More beautiful than only beauty ; trim
With all the graces time can never dim ;
An earth-born loveliness, divinely fair,—
Is she the God-sent answer to his prayer ?

REBEKAH.

Her task is done. Well pleased he places now
A sparkling jewel on her radiant brow ;
On either hand a costly bracelet lays,
And to the lovely maid of Nahor says :
“ Whose child art thou ? And can thy father spare
Room in his house to give us lodging there ! ”
“ I ’ m child to Bethuel, whom Milcah bore
To Nahor ; and my father has good store
Of straw and provender, and well can spare
Room in his house to give you lodging there . ”
The hoary honour of his head he bows,
Worships the Lord, and loud his faith avows.
“ Blest be the Lord of Abraham, whose will
With truth and mercy glads my master still ;
By whom conducted, being in the way,
My master ’ s kindred I have found to-day . ”

Rebekah runs and tells them all at home,
How that a man from Abraham has come ;
Her brother hastens to the happy well,
To bring him to the house of Bethuel.
How blest that instinct, mixt of love and wonder,
Attaching kindred far and long asunder, —
That joins the souls of those who dwell apart,
And keeps alive the soft green of the heart !
“ From Abraham ? And why those gifts to her ?
Come in — come in — thou blessed messenger ! ”

He comes,—sees lodged his camels,—bathes his feet ;
But, till he tells his message, will not eat.
“ I’m Abraham’s servant, and the Lord hath blest,
My master greatly ; and he is possess—
Through Him who made him great, and doth uphold—
Of asses, camels, servants, silver, gold.
An old-age child my mistress Sarah bare ;
Of all he hath that son is only heir.
My master bade me swear by God on high,
And made me put my hand beneath his thigh,
To take no wife of Canaan for his son
But of his kindred here. And I, thereon,
Said to my master,—it may chance to be
The kindred woman will not follow me.
‘ The Lord with whom I walk,’ he then replied,
‘ Will send his angel, and will be thy guide ;
Take thou my son’s wife of my father’s line,
And so be guiltless from this oath of thine.
But if my kindred will not give her thee,
Then of this oath thou guiltless art and free.’
And when I reached the well this very day,
I said, O Lord ! if thou dost guide my way,
Behold I stand this water-well beside,
And it shall come to pass th’ appointed bride,
When she shall come for water, and I say,
Out of thy pitcher let me drink, I pray,

Shall answer, 'Drink, and I will also draw
For all thy camels.' While I spake, I saw
Thy daughter coming ; as I said was done
By her—the chosen for my master's son.
And so I put the frontlet on her face,
And on her hands the token-bracelets place.
Now, tell me, to my master will ye shew
Kindness and truth. Now, tell me—yes or no,
That I to right or left may turn aside."
But Bethuel and Laban straight replied,—
" We answer bad nor good ; the Lord commands
The matter thus ; there our Rebekah stands.
Go, take her with thee for thy master's son,
For as the Lord hath spoken it is done."

The old man bows in worship,—then presents
The bride with spousal robes and ornaments ;
And for her mother and her brother brings
Forth from his budget gifts of precious things.
The contract duly made—his conscience white
Seasoned his meal and slumber with delight.

When from the lap of night the bright-cheeked day
Through morning's ruby portal took his way,
And shook the glory of his golden hair
Upon the soft curls of the dew-dropt air,—
What time the birds make music in the grove,
And hymn their matins to the sire of love,

And all the life, shut up in folds and stalls,
For outlet to their green impatient calls,—
Refreshed with happiness and sweet repose,
Up with the household Eleazer rose.

White-armed Rebekah, innocent of guile,
Breathes the pure sweetness of her virgin smile ;
Her parents, grateful for their daughter's weal,
In words and looks express the joy they feel ;
E'en Laban, careless of his dream of pelf,
Loves for the time his sister as himself ;
How soon the blast life's budding hopes destroy,—
How soon comes sorrow on the heel of joy !
Them and their comfort flits a film between,
Breathed through the house by that good Damascene.

"Now let me go," he said, "with Isaac's bride,—
His tent is cheerless since his mother died :
This blessing must be seen as well as told
In Sarah's tent,—and Abraham is old."
They ask a year—a month—ten days' delay ;
But still the old man says, "To-day—to-day !"
Then to herself the question was referred ;
Nor that sweet Nature, so appealed, demurred ;
"Wilt thou now with this man depart, or no ?"
At once the maiden answered, "I will go."
High-minded modesty needs no defence,
When truth inspires the words of innocence.

To know, and, knowing it, to do the right
Is ever lovely in the Maker's sight.
To leave for ever Haran's pleasant plain—
The friends she never more might see again—
The birthplace where her happy childhood flew—
The favourite spots familiar to her view—
Father and mother, and the dues that bless
His watchful care, her clinging tenderness—
The concords which an only sister move
To lean upon an only brother's love,—
She felt 'twas pain to leave them, and to roam
From that enchanting holiness of home ;
But for her weeping parents most she felt,
When for their blessing at their feet she knelt.
But faith gave comfort to the constant maid,—
She knew the heavenly Mover, and obeyed.
Nor was their blessing fruitless,—she was blessed ;
Her progeny the promised land possessed ;
And shall again—when to their hopes is given
Their Prince descending with the pomp of heaven ;
And on their holy hill the tribes shall sing
New songs of rapture to their only King,
And Love's true sun in full effulgence shine
Once more upon the widowed Palestine.

At Hebron now the travellers arrive ;
But who that gentle maiden's thought shall shrive ?

“ A little onward,” says her joyous guide,
“ And I shall see you stand by Isaac’s side !”
The camels with a fresher life career,
As knowing well their resting-place is near.
The song of birds—the gentle hum of bees—
The balmy breezes playing with the trees—
The cedars nodding on the wavy hills—
The thousand sweets each flowery slope distils,—
All the soft magic of the tranquil hour
Awakes and fills the sense of local power.
Down from the skies a mellow glory streams
From the fast-sinking sun’s tiar of beams ;
Long shadows fall from that bold range of hills,
While the deep west her heart with wonder fills.
There, ’mid the tissue of his glorious bed,
The regent of the day declines his head ;
His slanting sheets of light, as lakes, are set
Mid continents of gold and violet ;
And purple isles are in the golden sheen,
And gorgeous curtains over all the scene,
Diversified with every rainbow hue,
Up to the roof-work of the quiet blue.
Now happy-looking herds and flocks are seen
Returning homeward from their fragrant green ;
Now thick-set clumps of sylvan wildness—then
The toils of oxen and the works of men.

How such a view of Hebron elevates
Rebekah's soul, and interpenetrates !
While earth seems melting in the clasp of heaven,
What radiant visions to her thought are given !

The star of day is gone—the star of love
Looks on the maid of Haran from above ;
A holy love pervades the silent vale,
Too deep for utterance, and too strong to fail.
She feels the magic trembling o'er her frame,
And half-unconscious murmurs Isaac's name !

But, lo ! a man ! He comes to meet his bride.
Oh, happy meeting ! Happy evening-tide !
From the steep camel with a modest grace
The maid descends, and veils her lovely face.
The bridegroom and the bride together stand—
Together walk, conversing—hand in hand.
Duty unites them ; love the contract seals ;
The truth of either either lover feels.
He leads his God-given to his mother's tent ;
He fondly asks, nor she withholds consent.
God is the priest,—their fane the holy night,—
The stars their witnesses, and love their rite.
The moral sense on either heart imprest
Secured their fealty, and they went to rest.
The maid of Haran thus became a wife—
The bride of promise—joy of Isaac's life.

In her the memory of his mother lived,
And in Rebekah Sarah's worth revived :
Now without pain he thought upon his dead,
And by the living was recomforted.

IDYL II.

DEBORAH.

IDYL II.

DEBORAH.

THE queenly Deborah, with rapture fired,
And made to utter as the Spirit inspired,
With power invested by Divine command,
Beneath her palm-tree sat, and judged the land.
But Israel from the Lord had fall'n away,
Who gave them up to Jabin's iron sway ;
Whose captain, Sisera, crafty, bold, and strong,
Had with a cruel curb rebuked them long.
And now these malcontents must owe relief
From galling slavery to a woman-chief !
Headstrong Jeshurun ! Wilt thou never own
That safety cometh from the Lord alone ;
That arm of flesh is feeble as a reed,
And man's devices worthless as a weed ?

Hardhearted outcast ! Wilt thou not confess
The beauty and the power of holiness ?

Proud Hazor's lord securely builds his nest,
And in Harosheth Sisera takes his rest.
But what disturbs the king in his delight ?
His vulture scents afar the coming fight.
"To arms ! To arms ! and crush the rebel pride :
With purple dew let Jezreel's face be died."

At Deborah's command, bold Barak came,
And reverent stood before the queenly dame :
"Has the Lord spoken ? Must it not be done ?
Go forth with Naphtali and Zebulon ;
Of these ten thousand chosen warriors take,
And Jabin's multitude and chariots break.
To Kishon's stream shall Sisera draw his band—
The Lord will give him there to Barak's hand ;
Toward Mount Tabor with thy warriors go."
"There will I go with thee—without thee, no !"
"With me, then," said the glowing prophetess :
"But know, mistrusting Barak, ne'ertheless,
This journey shall not for thine honour tell—
The Lord to woman's hand will Sisera sell."

Nine hundred chariots cast their iron gleam
Far from Harosheth e'en to Kishon's stream ;

The host of Canaan sweeps on like a flood,
Or like a fire devouring down a wood.
Impatient Sisera thinks, in very scorn,
To mow down Israel like a field of corn ;
His mighty host he marshals in Jezreel,
And spreads his tents to lordly Tabor's heel.
As long as the war-horse, when the trumpets blow,
To break away and dash against the foe,
So Sisera pants to make his vaunting good,
And quench rebellion in the rebel's blood.
How can those few against his many stand ?
He vows to slaughter the devoted band—
To slay and spare not ; Cruelty and Wrath
Inspire his counsels and direct his path ;
Vengeance sits darkling on his clouded brow—
He thinks of carnage, not of battle, now.
The cloud on Tabor bursts, and overbears,
With sudden fury, chariots, warriors, spears !
Where now is Jabin's pride ? His host is gone,
And of his warriors all are slain but one !
Who from his car alights, and, like the prey
Before the swift-foot hunter, flees away ?
Fly, warrior, fly ! Devoted Sisera, fly !
Death bays thy heel—a moment's pause, and die !
Like a commissioned Hate sent forth to kill,
Whose fiery execution waits on will,

Barak is on thy trace—flee, Sisera, flee !
Or never more the sun shall shine on thee.

He has escaped ; with toil and terror spent,
He gladly hides in Heber's friendly tent.
'Tis Jael's voice that greets him at the door—
'Tis Jael's hand the chieftain covers o'er ;
More precious now that rug than brodered silk.
He asks for water, and she gives him milk.
Is this that Sisera ?—This disheartened hare,
That warrior, wise to scheme and prompt to dare ?
How changed from him who pass'd through Hazor's gate,
The prop and ornament of Jabin's state !
To guard his life a woman's help he prays—
A woman's hand the chief in covert lays ;
Oblivion's dews his fainting senses steep,
And heavily he sleeps his perilous sleep.
No wakening up for Sisera—never more
His step shall cross the Kenite's friendly door !
A woman's hand, a hammer, and a nail,
O'er Sisera's life and Jabin's crown prevail :
Through either temple she the tent-nail drives—
So Sisera died, and Jael's memory lives.

Halt, Barak, for the hunter's zeal is vain,
And Jael's hand thy hoped-for prey has slain ;

Come and behold where lies the plume of war—
The strength of Jabin, scourge of Issachar!
There—dead!—Let Zebulon exalt his voice,
And let exulting Naphtali rejoice.
In fetters none shall break the foe is bound;
Behold him safely fastened to the ground!

The land has rest—the tribes are overjoyed,
For Canaan humbled, Canaan's king destroyed.
Circled by chiefs, by crowds environed round,
With Wisdom's amaranthine chaplet crown'd,
Whom through their bounds the sons of Israel bless—
Beneath her palm-tree stands the prophetess;
Her eyes look clearly from their lighted cells,
And on her brow calm contemplation dwells;
Holy her mien, yet dove-like soft, and meek;
A sunny radiance mantles on her cheek;
Around her lips unspoken breathings move,
New-born of rapture and divinest love.
Behold! her bosom heaves! Her kindling eye
Burns, flashes with the informing Deity!
Her form dilates—an awful splendour now
Lightens her cheek and her expanded brow;
While mute Amazement holds the intent throng,
Labouring she breathes, and now she pours the
song.

For the mighty vengeance wrought
By Israel's sword,
When the willing people fought—
O praise the Lord !

Give ear, ye kings ! Ye princes, hear !
I to the Lord, to Israel's God,
Will lift the song, the harp will sound.
Lord ! When thou wentest forth from Seir,
And thy march on Edom trod,
Quaked the trembling earth around—
With water poured the heavens down,
Poured the clouds—each mountain-crown,
Even Sinai, in his place,
Melted before Jehovah's face.
In Shamgar's days, in Jael's days,
Untrodden were the public ways ;
The traveller stole through bypath only ;
The hamlets on the plain lay lonely,—
Till I—I, Deborah—arose,
Whom Israel as a mother knows.

They chose new gods,—then horrid sights
Of war filled all their gates with fear ;
'Mid forty thousand Israelites,
Was buckler ever seen, or spear ?

My soul is yours, ye chieftains tried !
And ye who would have freely died,
 The Lord with me as freely praise ;
Who ride white asses, and who judge,
Seated in state, and ye who trudge
 Your way afoot, your voices raise.

For the noise of the archers that spoiled at the wells,
How gracious the Lord is each village-troop tells ;
The praise of his righteousness rings on the plains,
And their gates, long deserted, his people regains.

Awake—up ! Deborah, awake and speed
 The song's outbursting flame ;
Barak, awake ! Thy captives captive lead,
 Son of Abinoam !

Against the mighty with a few went he ;
The people of the Lord went down with me.
From Amalek-mount rushed, eager to the fight,
Bold Ephraim first, and next the Benjamite ;
From Machir came the rulers—those who bear
The marshal's staff from Zebulon were there ;
With Deborah the valiant met the war,
The strength of Barak, chiefs of Issachar ;

They came—they rushed—they burst upon the foe,
Into the valley where he lay below.

By Reuben's fountains there were counsels various—

Why wert thou, Reuben, 'mid thy herds supine?

Was it to hear the lowing of thy kine?

By Reuben's fountains there were plans contrarious;

The shores of Jordan, Gilead kept along;

And Dan, why dwelt he then his ships among?

And Asher tarried, spiritless and craven,

Amid his rifts and in his sea-shore haven.

But Zebulon exposed his life in fight,

And Naphtali, from off the mountain-height.

The kings of Canaan came and fought,

Canaan's king in Taanach's meadow,

By the waters of Megiddo

Fought—nor won the spoil they sought.

From the heavens, in their courses,

Fought the stars 'gainst Sisera's forces;

The torrent Kishon o'er them rolled;

That ancient river Kishon old,

Swept and tore them out of sight—

Trample, my soul, upon their might!

Then clattered the horses' hoofs along,
In the hurry-skurry flight of the strong.

Curse Meroz, saith the Angel of the Lord,
A twofold curse upon her dastard horde ;
For they against the mighty never came—
They brought no succour in Jehovah's name.

But blest shall Jael be, the Kenite's wife,
O'er women blest in tents that lead their life.
Water he asked—with costly bowl she sped,
And gave him milk, the curded milk, instead.
She to the nail applied her left,
Her right hand to the hammer's heft ;
She smote him till his head was cleft—
She smote, she pierced his temples well,
And at her feet he bowed, he fell :
He bowed, he fell, he lay outspread ;
And where he bowed, he fell there dead.

From the window the mother of Sisera spied ;
She looked through the lattice, and, looking, she cried :
“ O ! why is his coming so long to descry ?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariot ? Why ? ”
Her prudent women made reply ;
She to herself in answer said,

“ Have they not in battle sped ?
Have they not shared the spoil they got ?
A damsel or two to each captain’s lot ?
A robe of price for Sisera too,
Broidered with flowers of various hue,
Rarely wrought and rich to view ?”

So perish, Lord, all foes of thine !
But let all those who love thee shine
Forth like the sun—the sun at best,
In all his glory full exprest.

IDYL III.

RUTH.

IDYL III.

RUTH.

To Bethlehem, with all abundance rife,
In Judah's lot, with many a spring supplied,
Called Ephrata from Caleb's fruitful wife,
Two lonely women came at evening-tide.
"Ha! can it be? It is Naomi!" cried
The gossips of the place, and gathered round
The friend long absent, lost, forgotten, found.

"Is this Naomi? This our pleasant one?"
"Nay!" she replied, with accent sad and stern,
"Naomi call me not; I've undergone
Much grief and bitterness: in one word learn,
I went out full, and empty I return;
With me most bitterly has dealt the Father;
Noami call me not, but Mara, rather."

Ten years were passed since she from Bethlehem,
With her two sons and husband, turned in flight
To Moab's land; what was become of them?
Long since Elimelech, the Ephrathite,
In Moab's land was buried out of sight;
And now the same way both her sons were gone,
Her only props, Mahlon and Chilion.

By famine pressed, they sought in Moab's land
A refuge, and therein they found their graves,
All but the widow. Now three widows stand
On Judah's confines, and Naomi craves
A blessing from the Lord, who only saves,
On the two women, widowed in their youth,
The wives of her dead sons, Orpah and Ruth.

For they were both of Moab, and though loath
To part with them, as for their sakes seemed best,
She to their mother's homes dismissed them both:
"The Lord deal kindly with you! Make you blest,
Each at her mother's house, and give you rest,
Each in her husband's home! For kindly ye
Have ever dealt both with the dead and me."

She kissed them both, and bitterly they wept,
And said,—“We will not turn, but go with thee.”

And she replied,—“ But how can I accept
This to your harm ? Why will ye go with me ?
Have I yet sons within my womb, to be
Your husbands ? If it were so, would ye tarry
Till they were born, and grown, and fit to marry ?

“ Turn ye, my daughters, for I now am old—
Too old to have a husband ; and I grieve
Much for your sakes ; but how could I withhold
What the Lord took, or our sad loss retrieve ?
Indeed ye must the lone old widow leave.”
Both kissed her, and both wept ; and Orpah so
Turned back to Moab ; Ruth refused to go.

“ The path thou treadest shall by me be trod,
And where thou lodgest will I also lie ;
Thy people shall be mine ; thy God my God ;
And where thou diest, there too will I die,
And there be buried. May the Lord on high
So deal with me, as I this vow maintain,
That nothing else but death shall part us twain.”

Thus Ruth exclaimed, and with her onward went ;
Nor did Naomi more objection make,
When she perceived her mind was fully bent
To leave friends, kindred, country, for her sake,

And with the people of the Lord to take
Her part for worse or better. So Ruth came
To Bethlehem with that dejected dame.

'Twas barley-harvest; and the gladsome youth
Of either sex were busy through the plain,
Reaping and gleaning in the fields; and Ruth
Did of the old Naomi leave obtain
To be of them, to glean the scattered grain.
'Twas Boaz' field that day she gleaned in,
(For so it chanced) dead Mahlon's near of kin.

And Boaz came into the field to see
What work they did, and to the reapers said,—
“The Lord be with you;” “And the Lord bless thee,”
They answered him; and when he turned his head,
And saw fair Ruth, his steward he questioned,
“Whence came this damsel?” He made answer clear,
“She with Naomi came from Moab here.

“She asked to let her glean here, and I let her;
And she has gleaned till now from morning-tide.”
And Boaz said,—“My daughter! hark! 'tis better
You glean not elsewhere, but that you abide
Fast by my maidens; them from side to side,
And field to field, take care to follow still,
And where you see them reaping glean at will.

“ I’ve charged the young men, and you need not shrink,
If haply some of them are standing round ;
But when you are athirst, go, freely drink.”
And then she said, low bowing to the ground,—
“ How in thy sight have I this favour found,
Who am a stranger ?” Boaz said,—“ Not so ;
How with Naomi you have dwelt I know,

“ And all your conduct since your husband died ;
How you from parents, country, came away
Unto a stranger people, and relied
On Israel’s God, under his wings to lay
Your safety ; and your trust he will repay.”
“ Though I am lowlier than thy lowliest maiden,
Yet thou thy handmaid hast with favour laden,

“ And blessed mine ear with comfortable speech.”
And at the meal-time Boaz called her nigh,
And bade her eat, and unto her did reach
The parched corn. She sat the reapers by,
And ate, and was sufficed ; and modestly
She rose, and to her gleaning went again ;
When Boaz said unto the reaping train,—

“ Let her glean freely, e’en among the sheaves,
Nor use ill language ; and if one lets fall

A handful every now and then, and leaves
For her to take, I shall not blame at all."
And Ruth gleaned on from then till evening fall ;
Of barley-grain an ephah gleaned, and went
To good Naomi, with her gain content.

The old dame asked her where she gleaned that day ?
" They called him Boaz," was sweet Ruth's reply.
" Blessed of the Lord !" Naomi then did say,
" Be Boaz, who remembers them that died,
Nor kindness to the living has denied.
The man is near of kin, and may redeem
Our Mahlon's land, if good to him it seem."

" And he did also bid me not to quit
His reapers through the harvest-time," said Ruth.
" My daughter," quoth Naomi, " it is fit
You should not leave this good man's fields in truth,
And be not found elsewhere." And so, in sooth,
She did while there was anything to glean,
And to Naomi still returned at e'en.

Then good Naomi said to gentle Ruth,—
" My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee ?
And is not Boaz of our kin in truth ?
Behold, to-night his barley winnows he :

Now hearken, dearest daughter mine, to me ;
Wash, and anoint thee, and thy raiment don,
And to the lucky threshing-floor be gone !

“ But do not to the man thyself make known,
Until he shall have done with drink and meat ;
Mark where he lies, and when he lieth down,
Lift up the clothes that are upon his feet,
And lay thee down ; and he will say, I weet,
What thou shalt do.” Quoth Ruth, “ All thou dost bid
Me do, that will I do ;” and went, and did.

With food and wine right merry Boaz went,
And laid him down, expecting slumber sweet :
And Ruth, to do Naomi’s hest, intent,
There softly came, and raised from off his feet
The coverlet, of modesty complete,
Knowing no wrong in that, nor fearing frown
For what she did, and softly laid her down.

And at the midnight Boaz woke in fear,
And turned himself ; but how could such thing be ?
Behold, a soft warm woman nestled there !
“ And who art thou ?” he said ; “ I’m come to thee,
I, Ruth, thy handmaid ; throw thy skirt o’er me ;
Thou art a kinsman.” “ Blest,” he said, “ be thou,
Blest of the Lord, who shewest kindness now ;

“Nor after young men, rich nor poor, hast run
For virtuous woman thee my people know ;
Fear not ; what thou requirest shall be done.
There is a nearer kinsman ; if he show,
When called upon, the part of kinsman—so ;
If not, as the Lord liveth, then I will ;
Until the morning, therefore, lie thou still.”

And at his feet until the morn she lay ;
Ere one the other knew, the youthful dame
Rose up ; and Boaz said,—“ Now go thy way ;
But let none know a woman hither came,
Lest evil tongues bring on the just foul shame ;
Now hold thy veil.” And he did in it pour
Of barley-corn six measures running o’er.

And she, before the people were astir,
Arrived at home. “ My daughter, who art thou ?”
Soon as she came, Naomi questioned her.
She told her all. “ Sweet daughter, rest thee now,
And see how it will fall ; the man, I trow,
Will have no rest, but his best effort spend
To bring this thing this very day to end.”

Boaz sat by the gateway of the town,
And saw the other kinsman pass, and cried,—

“ Ho ! come and sit here ;” and the man sat down.
He called ten elders of the town beside,
And they too sat. The matter thus was tried ;
To Mahlon’s nearer kinsman Boaz said,—
“ Naomi, who in Moab left her dead,

“ And is again from Moab come, doth sell
The land that was Elimelech’s ; wilt thou
Redeem it ? If thou wilt redeem it—well ;
For none beside thee has the right, I trow ;
And I come after thee. Then tell me, now,
Before these Elders, wilt or wilt thou not
Maintain they kin-right, and redeem the lot ?”

The kinsman said, “ I will.” “ But know, in truth,
That on the day of purchase,” Boaz said,
“ Thou must, too, buy it at the hand of Ruth,
The Moabitess, widow of the dead,
Whose land it was, to raise up in his stead
His name thereon.” “ In that case I decline
To buy it, lest I injure me and mine,”

The kinsman said ; “ but I resign my right
Therein to thee !” and he plucked off his shoe,
And gave it Boaz. (So they used to plight
Themselves in Israel to a contract true,

That they would this or that observe and do.)
Elders and people Boaz then addressed ;
“ You all as witnesses I now attest,

“ That I have from Naomi bought to-day
What was Elimelech’s ; and therewithal
Ruth for my wife, in order that I may
The name of the departed one recall,
And in his heirship his own heir install ;
To keep his name alive amid his race,
And in the gate of his allotted place.”

And all exclaimed,—“ Your witnesses are we ;
And may the woman, whom thou now hast ta’en
Unto thy bosom, by the Lord’s grace be
Like Rachel and like Leah, which blest twain
Built Israel’s house ; and be it thine to gain
Renown, and power, and riches in thy day,
And do thou worthily in Ephrata !

And may thy house like that of Pharez be,
Whom Tamar bore to Judah, of the seed
The Lord shall of this woman give to thee !”
So Ruth was wife to Boaz ; and, indeed,
She bore a son, whose grandson took the lead
In Israel, crowned King, and mighty Name—
The stem from which the Branch, the Saviour, came.

The women at his birth Naomi blessed,
And said,—“Blessed be the Lord, whose love appears
Now shewn to thee—who gives thee peace and rest.
Behold! A son to wipe away thy tears,
The hope, and prop, and comfort of thy years,—
The son of Ruth, who loveth thee—whose love
Better to thee than seven sons doth prove.”

Naomi to her bosom took the child,
And she became his nurse, and in him found
Her solace for past bitterness, and smiled
On her new hope. The women gathered round
And named him Obed; and they made resound
The place with transport and acclaiming joy—
“Naomi has a son, a lovely boy!”

Thrice blessed wert thou, gentle Ruth!
That Moab didst exchange for Bethlehem,
And Moab's idols for the God of truth,
Darkness for light; and wert inwrought a gem
In the Great King's imperial diadem,
Mother of princes, mother of the King,
Come and to come, with healing on his wing.

And thou, wherein the heaven-born Promise lay,
To this low earth descended from above,

Thrice blessed art thou, Bethlem Ephrata !
There the soft brooding of the mystic Dove
Warmed the fair bosom of the Infant Love ;
There Angels came to hymn the Holy Child
Sweet smiling on the Virgin-mother mild.

There grew the promised Branch from Jesse's stem,
The Woman's Seed to bruise the Serpent's head ;
And there shone out the Star of Bethlehem,
By which, as by a royal herald, led,
The Sages to the King with homage sped,—
Thrice blessed spot ! In which Angelic Voices
Sang Him in whom the universe rejoices !

IDYL IV.

SHEEP-SHEARING AT CARMEL.

2



IDYL IV.

SHEEP-SHEARING AT CARMEL.

Sorr falls the dew on Carmel,—soft the rain
That fills with fatness all the lowland plain ;
Glad life in all the laughing fields is seen,
And flocks and herds enjoy the rural green.
A thousand goats for Nabal keep the hills,
Shaded with trees and cool with frequent rills.
Three thousand sheep for him their fleeces bear,
And richer make the rich from year to year.
In vain heaven's dews on Sodom-lake descend,
Mix with its salt, and with its bitter blend ;
They soften, sweeten not the gulf of sin,
Nor any life can dwell that gloom within ;
And riches for the churl in vain increase ;
They bring no true joy, cannot purchase peace ;

They not a blessing but a curse fulfil ;
The more they grow, they more provoke his ill.
Exceeding wealth in vain to Nabal came,—
A fool by nature as a fool by name.

When David fled from Saul's infuriate wrath,
And with the wild beasts took a common path,
Shunning the haunts of man in his distress,
To find his safety in the wilderness ;
His young men and himself, an outcast band,
Driven forth as aliens from their father-land,
By hunger pressed, were oft compelled to roam
From the remorseless wild—their only home,
For life their necessary food to gain,
To win from pity, or from fear obtain.

From their look-out of overhanging rocks
They see the slopes of Carmel white with flocks ;
The merry shearers by the pleasant cool
Of running water clip the pomp of wool ;
Fresh from the stream the sheep, disburdened, bound,
And with recovered freedom frisk around.
The rich man's heart is glad ; the shearing done,
His board is spread, the festival begun.
Can mortal man, with mirth and feasting glad,
Without compassion see another sad ?
Fulfilled with good, and yet unapt to grant
Pity to sorrow, and relief to want ?

Go to ; go to ! To sight the fruit is good,
That brightening glows in Nabal's neighbourhood;
Those apples, like false friends that mock our trust,
Though fair without, within are full of dust.
Go ! Pluck and eat ! A-hungered, hope to find
Pulp in that seeming fruit and Nabal kind.
While pride of wealth his secret thought employs,
And he is busied with his festive joys,
Mirth in his eye, the wine-cup in his hand,
To Nabal come ten men of David's band,
And in their master's words express his plea ;
" Peace to thy house, and all thou hast, and thee.
Thy sheep are shorn, and let thy shepherds tell
If any harm from David them befell ;
Or, if they found aught missing from their charge,
While all thy flocks in Carmel strayed at large.
Wherefore, we ask it in a happy day,
Let us find favour in thine eyes, I pray ;
And give to us, as thou dost greatly thrive,
Whatever cometh to thy hand to give."
And Nabal answered ; " Who is David ? Who
The son of Jesse ? Men without ado
Now flee their masters, and from bondage break.
Shall I, then, of my bread and water take,
And flesh which I have for my shearers killed,
And give it you, that strangers may be filled ?"

So the ten messengers returning sped,
And told to David all that Nabal said.
Then David vowed he would that very night
Evil with evil to the full requite ;
That every man in Nabal's house should die
Before the next dawn streaked the dewy sky.
His followers he bade, with eager tone,
Gird on their swords—and girded on his own.
Four hundred men the princely Warrior led,
When he went forth to look on Nabal dead.
Meanwhile the feastful churl, self-satisfied,
Thought less of death than any thing beside.

This churlish Nabal had a charming wife,
Graceful in person, lovely in her life ;
And beautiful in conduct as in face,
She knew and did the duties of her place.
She ne'er was idle ; flax and wool she sought,
And with her own hands willingly she wrought :
She rose at day-dawn with a cheerful mind,
Call'd up her handmaids, and their tasks assign'd ;
Herself the spindle and the distaff plied,
And did much divers needlework beside.
Her heart was ever open to the poor ;
She drove no needy person from her door.
Her household loved to hear her gentle voice,
And in her presence ever did rejoice.

The law of kindness breathed in every word,
And wisdom in her speech ; she feared the Lord.
Above the price of rubies ! But who got
The treasure, for a treasure knew it not.
Nor now, nor ever shall her praises fail—
The goodly woman's name was Abigail.

One of the young men went and told the dame
How lately messengers from David came,
And Nabal railed on them, and said, " Our charge,
Safe as in fold, in Carmel strayed at large ;
And while our flocks the slopes depastured round,
In David's men a sure defence we found ;
They never came on us to spoil or slay,
But were a wall to us by night and day ;
Nor all the time we missed a single fleece,
While they watched round us and we slept in peace.
Against our master and his household woe
Is now determined—this for certain know ;
And, if thou canst, some way of safety seek—
For to the son of Belial who can speak ?"

Then Abigail (it was no time to tarry)
Bade them the asses ready make to carry
A wrath-averting gift ; of wheat-flour fine
Two hundred loaves ; two skins of generous wine ;
Five bushels of parched corn ; five roasted sheep ;
Two hundred cakes of figs ; and eke a heap

Of raisins, many a cluster;—with their load,
The asses soon were trotting on the road.

Her train went on before, and she did follow;
And it so chanced that when she turned the hollow
Which the hill screened, lo! David and his men
Were rushing down into the quiet glen.
When she saw David, from the ass she lighted,
And bowed down, self-possessed, though sore affrighted,
And said in gentle tones of supplication,
Which oft will turn aside man's indignation;
“To me, my lord, I pray, incline thine ear,
And graciously thy lowly handmaid hear;
This son of Belial do not thou regard,
But let his folly be the fool's reward;
For fool he is by name, and folly still
Is with this Nabal to corrupt his will.
Thy young men's coming was not known to me,
Or else they had not so returned to thee.
As the Lord liveth, who this day for good
Hath now withholden thee from shedding blood,
May all who at thy life or honour touch
Be such as Nabal—altogether such!
And, good my lord, now let thy young men lift,
And take away with them thy handmaid's gift.
Pardon my boldness, and depart in peace;
The Lord will surely make thy house increase,

And stablish it ; for thou dost only fight
His battles, and before him walkest right.
Yet one pursues thee with relentless strife—
But thou art bound up in the roll of life
Which the Lord keeps ; and he thy foes shall fling
Away—as from the middle of a sling.
But when at last thy house shall firmly stand,
And thou art ruler over all the land,
This shall not be thy grief,—a vengeance ta'en
By thine own hand—a man unjustly slain—
Blood shed without a cause ; but when with thee
'Tis well, my lord, do thou remember me."
And David said, "Blest be the Lord, who now
Sent thee to meet me ! Blest be also thou,
Who thy good will to me hast thus disclosed,
And 'twixt my rage and me hast interposed ;
For I had vowed I would this very night
Evil with evil to the full requite—
That every man in Nabal's house should die
Before the next dawn streaked the dewy sky.
Return in peace—thy word is heeded, kept ;
Thy gift and good-will freely I accept."

But Abigail, on her return, poor Nabal found
Deep in his cups, in mirth and riot drowned :
A kingly feast before the churl was spread,
Nor any thought his joy disquieted ;

He drank and feasted, till dead-drunk he lay,
And snored the wine-fume heavily away.
But when he woke next morning, and his wife
Told him what danger threatened late his life,
How turned aside by her, and how incurred,
Chilled to the core, he answered not a word ;
His heart died in him, and, by fear o'erthrown,
He was as one congealed into a stone.
And on the tenth day from his feastful pride,
The Lord smote silly Nabal, that he died.

And David blessed the Lord, who stayed his hand
From Nabal's life, when he went with his band
To put in act his meditated crime ;
And mindful of her worth, in after-time,
He woo'd (and how could David's wooing fail ?)
And won to wife the lovely Abigail.

IDYL V.

SUSANNA.

IDYL V.

SUSANNA.

WHAT time the Heathen with permitted fury,
Like a huge barrier-breaking flood, bore down
The last defences of revolted Jewry,
And carried off the monarch and his crown,
And drove the people like a spoil of sheep,
And left Jerusalem a ruinous heap;

Of the Captivity in Babylon,
Whose hearts were sad, whose eyes with sorrow dim,
Dejected thralls, once free in times foregone,
There was a righteous man called Joachim,
Who to his bosom took a lovely wife,
To solace his discomfortable life.

The fair Susanna was old Celchia's daughter ;
He from her childhood, when she gathered posies
On the broad margin of Euphrates, taught her
Their people's story and the law of Moses,
Till she grew up meek, modest, wise, and good,
To the full bloom of blushing womanhood.

Her husband was a man of wealth and station,
Upright and honourable too, withal,
Looked up to by the people of his nation,
Who at his pleasant house would often call,
Because he was an honourable man,
Or rich, or both—let them decide who can.

He had a noble mansion—for a Jew
Shut up within the stronghold of Oppression
(For most of all men Israel's sons eschew
To let appear the wealth in their possession) ;—
A large and pleasant garden was behind,
With choice of shade, and fruits of many a kind.

The people chose twain Elders to decide
In controversies, which was right or wrong ;
To Joachim's rich house the judges hied,
And for their judgment thither came the throng :
As by coactive law flies come to honey,
So men of office do to men of money.

Now ever as the folk withdrew at noon,
Susanna to the garden used to pass ;
Those Elders marked her daily custom soon,
And looked too long and oft. Alas ! Alas !
There is no wisdom in the seeming wise—
A dangerous youth was in those old men's eyes.

Whilst both their hearts with passion were inflamed,
To the clear heaven could neither upward look ;
Each hid his shame, but neither was ashamed
To fix lewd glances on the face that took
His fancy captive ; both of them were bent,
At her expense, to gain themselves content.

Each kept his secret guarded from the other,
And keenly sought from day to day occasion
To get quit of his dear official brother
By slight pretext, or underhand evasion,
Whilst his prodigious appetite for sinning
Grew by the hindrances to his beginning.

Till on a day, when all the folk had got
Judgment or justice, just as it might be—
Certes these things, confounded oft, are not
One and the same—the judges did agree
To part at once,—for either hoary sinner
Felt an unusual craving for his dinner.

Each went his way, but slyly came again,
And met his brother there ; nor had they need
Of many words to make the matter plain ;
The two gray wolves were instantly agreed
To hunt down that particular prey in common,
And hugged each other, thinking of the woman.

And evermore they watched a fitting time
To pounce upon their sweet and dainty spoil ;
And Opportunity is pimp for Crime,
Nor is disheartened after many a foil,
But waits and watches till the feat is done,
The casket opened, and the booty won.

A limpid bath was in a sheltered spot
Of the cool garden, where Susanna used
At times to bathe her when the day was hot ;
And knowing not that wicked eyes abused
Her privacy, she took one day the path,
With purpose to refresh her in the bath.

And straightway to the cool green arch she went,
And sitting down began to disarray her ;
Her maids for oils and essences she sent,
Not dreaming men were hid there to betray her ;
They at her bidding closed the garden door,
And shut her in with the twain sinners hoar.

With nothing but her inner garment on,
She by the water carelessly reclined ;
Her slumbrous thought soon pleasant fancies won,
And summer dreams were flitting through her mind ;
With one hand she her graceful head was propping,
The other idly in the water dropping ;

With her unfastened hair the whispering South
Sported, and freely played along the whiteness
Of her fair swan-like neck, and kissed her mouth,
And crept upon the alabaster brightness
Of her rich bosom, on which pleasant station
Love's globes soft heaved with gentlest undulation.

The wavy outline of her form was seen
Reflected in the water ; and she lay
Glistening in youthful beauty's rosy sheen,
Like some incarnate spirit, that, astray,
From the bright heaven of its immortal birth,
Has new alighted on this lower earth.

Not long she lay in that most holy quiet,
For soon the twain conspirators rushed in,
And scared her with their lewd ungentle riot,
And sought to frighten her into the sin,
In whose deep trap they thought she was insnared ;
And thus the hoar Antiquities declared ;

“Susanna! See, the garden-door is shut;
No man can see us; to our love consent;
Or else we will proclaim thee for a slut,
Caught by us in the act incontinent
With a young man, to which end 'twill appear
Thy maidens thou didst send away whilere.”

Susanna sadly sighed and said, “I see
That I am straightened now on every side;
For if I do this thing 'tis death to me;
And if I do it not, I must abide
Doom at your hands; 'twere better so to die,
Than in the Lord's sight do iniquity.”

With that Susanna screamed and loudly cried;
And one of them unclosed the garden door,
And both cried out against her; thither hied
The servants in hot haste, and wondered more,
And felt as if the shame was all their own,
When the twain Elders made their matter known.

Nor those Iniquities the next day trembled
To prosecute their plea against her life;
But when the folk were at the house assembled,
Bade summon Joachim's attainted wife.
Her father, mother, and her younglings dear,
And all her kindred came with her in fear.

And the twain Elders in their pride of place,
Looking austere as beseemed their duty,
Bade them lift off the veil from her sweet face,
That they might freely gaze upon her beauty.
Therefore her friends and all that saw her wept ;
But steadily her foes their purpose kept.

Both Elders then stood up, and on her head
They laid their hands : Susanna turned her eyes
Tearful to heaven, and to herself she said,
“ The Lord will never fail me.” But their lies
Those Elders spake, as men of conscience tender,
Who in their pureness loathed the fair offender ;

“ As in the garden we walked yesterday,
This woman came and shut the garden door ;
Two maids came with her, whom she sent away ;
Then from his hiding-place her paramour
Ran to her arms, and lay with her. We ran
At sight thereof, and strove to hold the man ;

Stronger than we, he broke away and fled ;
To get his name from her in vain we tried ;
These things we testify.” Susanna said :

“ O everlasting God ! by whom descried
All secret things are known, and who dost see
And know all things that are before they be :

Thou knowest that these men are falsely sworn,
And take away my life, and I must die
For what I never did." Condemned, forlorn,
Led to be put to death, the Lord on high
Piteous regarded her, and in a youth,
Named Daniel, put the spirit of holy truth ;

Who cried ; " I from this woman's blood am clear ;"
The people said ; " What mean these words just spoken ?"
He boldly cried, without a touch of fear ;
" Are ye such fools that without proof or token
To pass for proof, ye have condemned to die
A daughter of our Israel ? I deny

The woman's guilt ; return ye to the place
Of judgment, for false witness have they borne
Against her life." The people did retrace
Quickly their way. The judges looked with scorn
On Daniel, and they said ; " Come, sit beside us,
Since God with such Assessor doth provide us."

But Daniel said ; " Put these two men aside,
One from the other." When they were apart,
He called for one of them, and loudly cried,
" Thou false and hoary-headed Sin, that art
Grown old in wickedness, malevolent,
False judge ! Thou hast condemned the innocent,

And knowingly hast left the guilty free,
Albeit the Lord hath said, 'Thou shalt not slay
The innocent;' say, underneath what tree
This woman and the man together lay."
In mortal terror, as it well might be,
The false-heart said, "Under a mastick tree."

And Daniel said; "'Tis well; for thou hast lied
Against thine own head, and awaits thee now
The stern Destroyer." He was put aside,
And Daniel to the other said; "O thou,
That art of Chanaan's, not of Judah's seed,
Beauty hath lured thee, lust deceived, indeed.

Thus Israel's daughters have ye foully tried,
Who to your naughtiness from fear consented;
But Judah's daughters never could abide
Your evil, nor from fear of death relented.
But speak, and tell us, underneath what tree
This woman and the young man didst thou see?"

"Under the spreading holm-oak," he replied.
Then loud exclaimed the youthful judge severe,
"'Tis well; thou too against thy life hast lied,
And the Destroying Angel waits thee near."
With that the people gave a mighty shout,
And to the Lord they poured their praises out,

Who saveth them that trust in Him. That day
The innocent blood was saved ; and in the gin
Which they did basely for another lay,
Perished those hoary-headed men of sin.
By their own mouth convict, the coat of stone
They for Susanna meant became their own.

IDYL VI.
HELIODORUS.



IDYL VI.

HELIODORUS.

WHAT time the reins the just Onias kept,
In a brief peace the holy City slept;
The rage of license the high priest restrained,
Rebuked the bad, and all the laws maintained;
He cheered the good, and never spared the naught,
By precept much, more by example taught.
The lawless rabble his strict justice feared,
And holy men his holiness revered.
E'en princes to the temple homage paid,
And many an offering on the altar laid;
And King Seleucus freely gave the price,
Nor grudged it, of all kinds of sacrifice.
But new disorder Simon must begin,
A wilful son of headstrong Benjamin;

And plunging forward from his natural bias
For anarchy, he quarrelled with Onias.
But when e'en there the power of right he learned,
The bustling demagogue Informer turned ;
And to the Syrian governor he told,
That in the treasury was countless gold,
Hid for bad purposes against the King,
Which to his royal state might damage bring ;
The King might get this treasure, as was fit,
By putting forth his hand to gather it ;
And still the traitor cloaked his specious lie
Under the old pretext of loyalty.

Was ever king averse to swell his store ?
The more he gives, or wastes, he needeth more.
The Governor unto the King explained
The matter, who right royally ordained,
"The treasure was his own," and who could save it,
When the great Royalty resolved to have it ?
And at his bidding Heliodorus went
To bring it, charged with many a compliment,
The promise of his favour, and so forth—
Words valued, doubtless, at their proper worth.

The Treasurer through Cœlo-Syria past,
And to the holy City came at last,
When to Onias said this Heliodorus ;
"Sir Priest, 'tis fitting now you lay before us

Of all the treasure an exact account,
And give into my hands the whole amount ;
For King Seleucus knows by sure advice
Of all your secret wealth, by artifice,
For dangerous purpose, as he thinks, kept hid.”
Onias answered him : “ Now God forbid,
Whom here we worship as the True and Just,
That any seize the treasure laid in trust,
In his own temple lodged, for the relief
Of hapless widows in their want and grief,
Whose fatherless young children hence are fed,
Without hope else of having daily bread :
None other treasure is there kept by us,
Save a deposit of good Hircanus.
Two hundred talents here are laid of gold,
Four hundred more of silver : all is told.
But what rash hand shall dare to violate
The temple to the Holy dedicate ;
Seize a deposit, snatch the orphan’s food,
And quench the life of feeble widowhood ?”
“ It is the king’s ; lodged in whatever name,
And for whatever end, for that I came,”
Said Heliodorus, and the following day
Appointed he to take his prize away.
What grief ! What wailing in the holy City !
What shame, scorn, indignation, hatred, pity !

Prayers, imprecations, sobs, and screams proclaimed
How all the people felt that they were shamed.
The delicate of women rushed along,
And thrust themselves into the anxious throng;
The mother put her infant from the breast,
And in the cradle left to cry or rest;
The virgin beauties, all unguarded then,
Exposed themselves unto the gaze of men,
And tossed their white arms wildly in the air,
Unconscious that their lovely necks were bare.
“He comes!” the people shouted: “’tis the hour—
God! wilt thou not put forth thy mighty power?”
And as he rode, they prayed him, “Trample o’er us,
But do not this foul scandal, Heliodorus!”
Onward he rode, circled with bristling spears,
With troops of swordsmen and tall halberdiers.

The white-robed priests before the altar lay,
Praying for help on that disastrous day.
It was a grief to see the high-priest’s face,
Where one his mortal agony might trace;
Thick beads of sweat were gathered on his brow;
As from an ague shook his limbs, I trow;
As one in horror of thick darkness lost,
This way and that his arms he feebly tost;
He looked like some poor wretch condemned to die,
Who could not pray in his extremity.

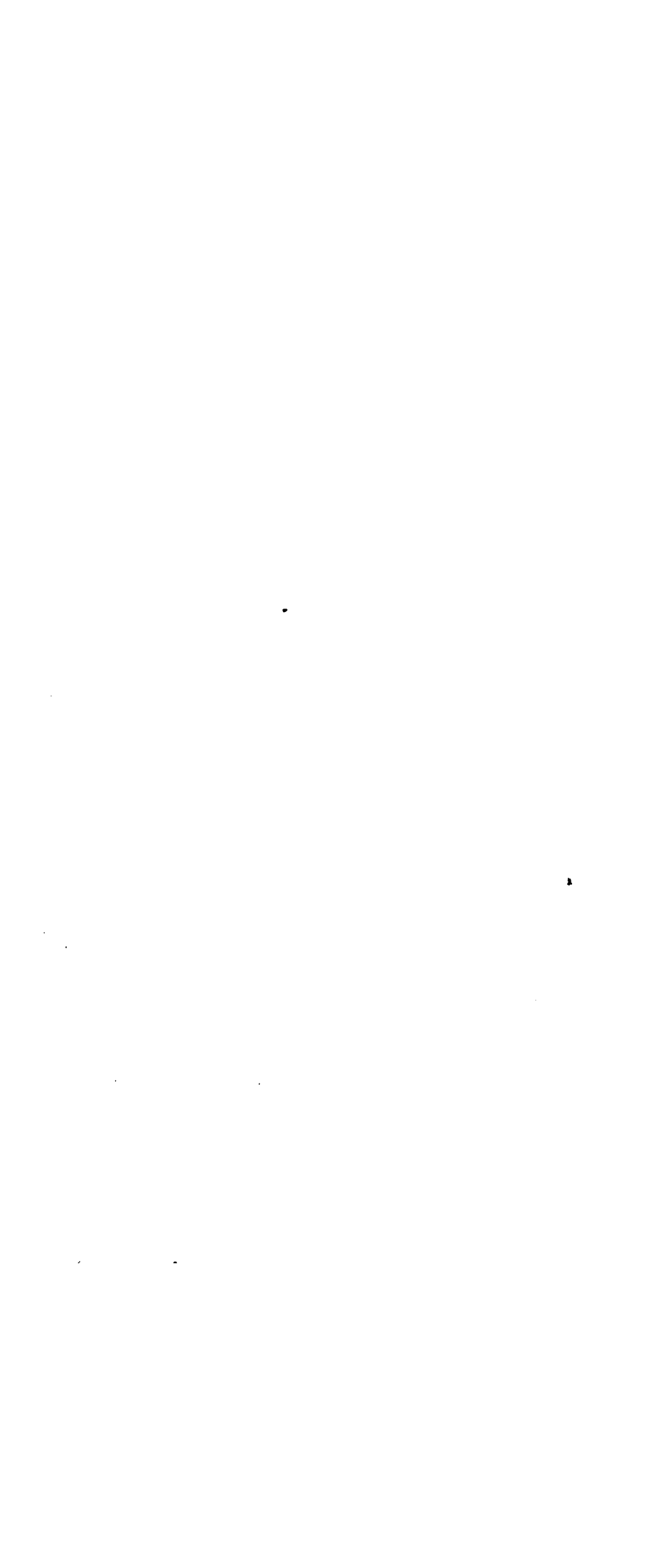
But when with tramp of feet the causeway rung,
And Heliodorus from his charger sprung,
And in the temple came with all his train,
The fine old man stood up erect again.
But Heliodorus, on the spoil intent,
Toward the treasure-chamber boldly went.
Ha! Gentile! With the living God wilt trifle?
Profane his sanctuary, his temple rifle?
Lo! as the unbeliever proudly trod,
Was shewn the power of everlasting God.
For suddenly, quick as a tongue of flame,
A Rider and his steed amidst them came:
The horse, whose trappings glorious were to note,
With his fore-feet at Heliodorus smote;
And terrible the horseman to behold,
Clad in a complete mail of gleaming gold.
Afoot before the dreadful Rider went
Two youths, for strength and beauty excellent,
And comely in apparel; and these Twain
Scourged Heliodorus, speechless with death-pain.
The Vision vanished; as one dead he lay,
And in a litter was conveyed away.
The temple, lately filled with fear and sadness,
Resounded now with hymns of joy and gladness.
In his own place the Lord had shewn a sign,
And thither sent his Messengers divine.

What succour had the Gentile from his spears,
His troops of swordsmen and tall halberdiers ?
Whom like a prince his guard had thither led,
They senseless carried forth and seeming dead.

But he recovered ; for Onias made
A sacrifice, and for the Gentile prayed.
Now while the priest was an atonement making,
And Heliodorus to new life was waking,
The Youths, who scourged him, suddenly stood by,
And told him that the glorious Lord on high
Had spared his life for good Onias' sake,
And bade him everywhere confession make
Of God's great power to cast down and restore ;
And then they left him, and appeared no more.

IDYL VII.

THE BRIDE: A DRAMATIC IDYL.



IDYL VII.
THE BRIDE: A DRAMATIC IDYL.

Persons.

THE BRIDEGROOM.

THE BRIDE

Chorus of Virgins, her attendants.

The Followers of the Bridegroom.

THE CHAMBERLAIN, *the royal messenger* (πομπαῖος).

Vine-dressers, &c.

SCENE.—*The Inclosure of the Palace and Royal Gardens.*

SCENE I.

BRIDE, VIRGINS, and CHAMBERLAIN; afterwards

BRIDEGROOM.

BRIDE.

WITH softest kisses let his mouth kiss mine.

CHAMBERLAIN.

Yea! for thy love will sweeter be than wine.

VIRGINS.

Yea! for to him thy own peculiar bloom
Is fragrant as the sweets which thee perfume.
The Virgins love thee, for thy name is gone
Abroad, like a poured perfume.

BRIDE.

Lead me on.

VIRGINS.

We hasten after thee.

BRIDE.

But me the King
Himself will to his inner chamber bring.

VIRGINS.

In singing thee will we lift up the voice,
Exulting praise thee, praising thee rejoice.
Thy love is sweeter than the fragrant wine,
And like the morn thy loveliness doth shine.

BRIDE.

Black am I—

VIRGINS.

Beautiful—

BRIDE.

As Kedar's tents.

VIRGINS.

As the King's curtains and habiliments.

BRIDE.

Oh, look not on me,—I am black to see ;
The scorching sun hath much discoloured me.
My kindred heaped me with contempt and hate ;
The sons of my own mother made me wait,
And watch the vineyards,—so their scorn was shown.
I watched the vineyards, nor was one mine own.
Where dost thou feed the flock, my soul's own sweet !
Where put to shelter from the noontide heat ?
Why should I like a muffled stranger be
'Mid flocks of others, while I search for thee ?

VIRGINS.

Fairest of women, if thou canst not tell,
Follow the flock-track—it will guide thee well ;
Or feed thy kids the shepherds' tents beside,
Where, till he come, none ill shall thee betide.

BRIDEGROOM (*meeting them*).

I likened thee, my love, on thy advancing,
To the proud steeds in Pharaoh's chariot prancing.
Thy cheeks reflect the sheen of jewels rare
Set in thine ears, and on thy forehead fair;
Thy neck with beads is beautiful—but we
Richer adornment will have made for thee,
A dress of costly stuff and precious things,
With silver studs and golden borderings.

BRIDE.


I on the King threw nard of pleasant smell,—
The nard was sweeter as on him it fell.
To me my dearest, my beloved one,
A perfume is of myrrh and cinnamon;
Therefore my love betwixt my breasts shall lie
Through all the night, as precious spicery.
Sweet is my love to me, within his bower,
As is En-gedi's clustering hefnah-flower.

BRIDEGROOM.

Lo! thou art passing beautiful, my love,—
Lo! beautiful, with eyes o' the turtle-dove.

BRIDE.

What beauty, my beloved, in thee is seen!
How sweet our flowery bed! How fresh the green!



How blooms our carpet with its lively woof!
Cedars the beams, and cypresses the roof!
I am a wild-flower of the open field—
A lily of the sort the valleys yield.

BRIDEGROOM.

A lily in the midst of thorns, my fair!
If any with the daughters thee compare.

BRIDE.

And thou amid the sons, compared with these,
Art as the citron midst the forest trees.
I longed to make its shadow my retreat,
And to my taste its fruit will be—how sweet!
Oh, bring me to the banquet-house, and raise
Love's banner o'er me with its starry blaze.
Oh, bring me citrons, cordials—for I need
Refection,—I am faint with love, indeed!
Under my head his left arm doth uphold me,
His right doth softly, tenderly infold me.
Oh, by the does, and fawns that follow them,
I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem!
Let not the slumber of my love be shaken;
Stir not, I charge you, till himself awaken.

SCENE II.

BRIDE *and* VIRGINS.

BRIDE.

'Twas my love's voice! He comes! Behold him leaping
Upon the mountains, o'er the hillocks sweeping!
As light of foot as any fawn is he,—
Fleet as the roebuck—and he speeds to me!

He stood behind our fence and peeped, secure
Of welcome, through the flowery coverture,
And at the lattice shewed his lovely head,
And tenderly to me, his true love, said,—
“ Arise, and come! my loved and lovely one:
For, lo! the winter o'er, the rain is gone;
The ground is garnished with the bloom of flowers;
The birds are singing in the groves and bowers;
Her love-song now the turtle-dove distils;
Its fruit with richest juice the fig-tree fills;
The new vine-blossoms scent the clear calm air
With sweetest fragrance; rise and come, my fair!
My dove, that in the clefts of rocks dost hide,
Where to the spoiler entrance is denied.
Speak to me, love, and let thy face appear—
Lovely thy face, and sweet thy voice to hear.

“ My vineyard-keepers! watch the vines with care,
And take the foxes which for spoil repair,
Or else they will the tender grapes devour,
And leave no vintage for the vintage-hour.”
“ My love is mine, and I am his indeed;
Will not my love among the lilies feed?
Stay till the day breathe, and the shadows flee,—
Stay with me, my beloved, and comfort me!”
But as I spake, he turned him to depart—
On Bether’s tops so bounds the startled hart.

I sought my dearest on my bed at night;
I sought, but could not find my soul’s delight.
I said,—“ I will arise, and to and fro
In quest of my beloved one will go.
Him will I seek ’mid night’s uncertain shades,
In the broad places and the colonnades.
Where has he gone and left his love behind him?”
I rose and sought him, but I could not find him.
The nightly watchers, as they went their round,
Me running all about at random found.
“ Tell me—oh, tell me, watchers of the night,
Have ye—oh, have ye seen my soul’s delight?”
Scarce had I passed them when my love I found,
And round him eagerly my arms I wound;
Nor would release him from my fond embrace,
Until I brought him to my mother’s place.

Oh, by the does, and fawns that follow them,
I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem !
Let not the slumber of my love be shaken ;
Stir not, I charge you, till himself awaken.

SCENE III.

VIRGINS; *afterwards*, BRIDEGROOM and BRIDE.

FIRST VIRGIN (*on sight of the Bride with the bridal train*)

Who is it from the desert comes,
Like to a cloud of smoke, which gums,
Bought from the merchant store, dispense—
A smoke of myrrh and frankincense ?

SECOND VIRGIN.

It is the royal palanquin !
Around it sixty men are seen,
Of Israel's warriors famed afar,
Sixty swordsmen, trained to war.
Each has his sword upon his thigh,
Lest some fear of night be nigh.
The palanquin King Solomon
Had made from wood of Lebanon.
The feet are made of silver ;

Of cloth of gold the cushion ;
The hangings are of purple ;
The inside is mosaic,
Inlaid with many a brodered gem,
Love-mottoes over every one ;
The daughters of Jerusalem
Embroidered it for Solomon.

THIRD VIRGIN (*on sight of the King coming to meet his
Bride*).

Daughters of Sion ! Look and see—
Who cometh yonder ? Who is he ?
Lo ! the crowned King appearing,
And the golden circle wearing,
With the which his mother crowned him,
On the day whereon he bound him
By the holy marriage-vows
To his lovely, loving spouse.

Enter BRIDEGROOM and BRIDE.

BRIDEGROOM (*having lifted her veil*).

Lo ! my beloved, thou art fair, most fair ;
Thine eyes are doves' eyes ; and thy clustering hair
With many a rich and glossy ringlet floats,
Thy head adorning, as a flock of goats,

In many a cluster hanging from the height,
Glistens on Gilead in the morning light.
Thy teeth are white and even, like the sheep
Twin-bearing ewes, which from the wash-pool leap
When they are shorn; thy mouth with beauty glows;
Like scarlet threads, thy lips their bloom disclose;
Thy cheeks from out thy tresses shine to view,
Rich in their tint as the pomegranate's hue.
Thy neck is like the tower beheld afar
Which David built to keep the spoils of war;
Within the stately tower are hung to ken
A thousand shields—all shields of mighty men.
Thy breasts are like twin fawns one mother bred,
That sport and feed upon the lily-bed.
Till the day breathe, and night be passed away,
Upon this myrrh-hill I my head will lay,
And on this mound of frankincense will be.
Fair art thou, love! There is no spot in thee.

SCENE IV.

BRIDEGROOM, BRIDE, VIRGINS, *and the* BRIDEGROOM'S
COMPANIONS.

BRIDEGROOM.

Hither, my partner, my espoused one,—
Hither, hie hither, sweet, from Lebanon.

From steep Amana look securely down,
From Senir's top, and Hermon's lofty crown ;
And from the lions' dens, and from the height
Of the Pard-mountains, fearless, cast thy sight.
My spouse, my sister ! Thou hast touched my heart,
Hast touched my bosom in the inmost part.
One look of thy dear eyes—one graceful turn
Of thy fair neck, has made me inly yearn.
How pleasant is thy love, fair sister mine !
And how much better is thy love than wine !
Sweeter the odours which thy robes dispense
Than are all perfumes, spices, frankincense.
Thy lovely mouth pure milk and honey fill,—
The virgin honey thy sweet lips distil.
Thy garments a delicious odour shed,
Like that of Lebanon's dew-sparkling head.
A fenced and sheltered garden is my fair—
A fountain sealed—a spring locked up with care
In thy rich garden are pomegranates found ;
All sorts of precious fruits therein abound ;
Hennah, and nard, and saffron,—incense-trees,
Aloes, and myrrh, and all choice spiceries.
Thy garden has within itself a rill
That with refreshment all its life doth fill—
A spring of living waters ; and thereon
Run down the trickling streams from Lebanon.

BRIDE.

Awake, O north-wind ; gently breathe about,
Thou south, that from the spice-trees may flow out
Their sweetest odours. Come, my love, and eat
The pleasant fruits within thy cool retreat.

BRIDEGROOM.

Into my garden I am come to thee ;
My myrrh and spices have I gathered me ;
Have eaten honey from the comb ; and wine
Have drunk with milk. Come in, companions mine
Come, eat and drink ; here plenty never ends ;
Drink ye, yea, drink abundantly, my friends !

SCENE V.

BRIDE *and* VIRGINS ; *afterwards*, BRIDEGROOM.

BRIDE.

I was asleep, but soon my heart awoke ;
My love was knocking—it was he that spoke ;
“ Open to me, my gentle one and true,
My undefiled ! My head is filled with dew,
My head is heavy with the drops of night,—
Open, my dove, my darling, and delight ! ”

“Must I now rouse me from my slumber sweet,
Put on my raiment, and defile my feet?”
Through the door-hole he tried to raise the latch;
The bar was fixed, the peg was in the catch.
I yearned towards him, and myself I roused,
And rose to open to my own espoused.
My hand dropped myrrh, pure myrrh my fingers
dropped
On the door-latch, which had his entrance stopped.
I opened to him—but I was alone;
My soul was faint, because my love was gone.
I sought, but found him not; I called his name,
He answered not; the nightly watchers came,
And when they found me, they my face would see,—
They raised my veil, they struck me, wounded me.
I charge you, Virgins, if ye chance to find
My own beloved, bear my charge in mind;
Whatever else ye tell him, tell him this,
That I am love-sick, and my love is his.

VIRGINS.

Fairest of women! What is thy beloved
More than another, that thou thus art moved?
What better than another's dear is he,
That we receive so strict a charge from thee?

BRIDE.

Fair is he with his cheeks of ruddy hue,
Among ten thousand eminent to view.
With purest gold his faultless head compare ;
Black as a raven floats his clustering hair.
His eyes like milk-white doves, that flock beside
The streamlet, bathing in the shallow tide ;
His cheeks like garden-beds, which spice-flowers fill ;
His lips like lilies, which sweet myrrh distil ;
His hands like rings of gold, inlaid and bright
With the clear sparkle of the chrysolite ;
His body like a frame of ivory made,
And with a blaze of sapphires overlaid.
His legs like marble pillars to behold,
And fitly set on pedestals of gold.
His goodly presence is like Lebanon,
And like the cedar-trees which grow thereon ;
Sweet is the mouth, and sweets his words express ;
And he is altogether loveliness.
This is my own beloved, my precious gem,
My partner, daughters of Jerusalem !

VIRGINS.

Fairest of women ! Whitherward went he ?
Thy love, thy partner, will we seek with thee.

BRIDE (*recollecting where he has probably retired*).

He to his garden went, within the bowers
To feed, and from the beds to gather flowers.
I am all his ; he dearly loveth me ;
Among the garden lilies feedeth he.

BRIDEGROOM (*who meets them going to the garden*).

Fair as Jerusalem art thou to sight,
And beautiful as Tirzah, my delight ;
And dazzling as an army's bright array,
With streaming banners marching on the way.
Oh, turn aside thy tender eyes, my fair ;
They have o'ercome me ; and thy clustering hair
With many a rich and glossy ringlet floats,
Thy head adorning, as a flock of goats,
In many a cluster hanging from the height,
Glistens on Gilead in the morning light.
Thy teeth are white and even, like the sheep,
Twin-bearing ewes, which from the wash-pool leap ;
Thy cheeks from out thy tresses shine to view,
Rich in their tint as the pomegranate's hue.
A bloom of virgins in the palace shines,
And threescore queens and fourscore concubines ;
But like my perfect one there is none other ;
The only one, the choice one of her mother.

The virgins saw her, and pronounced her blest ;
The queens and concubines her praise expressed—
“ Who looks forth like the morning fresh and bright ;
Fair as the moon ; clear as the sun’s pure light ;
And shining like the starry hosts on high,
That march along the pathway of the sky ? ”

SCENE VI.

BRIDE, VIRGINS, BRIDEGROOM, *and his* COMPANIONS.

BRIDE.

I to my sheltered garden went, to view
The fruits that in the happy valley grew ;
To see if the pomegranate-buds were blown,
And the young tendrils of the vine were grown.
Ere I knew why I ran away in dread,—
The chariots of Aminadib so fled.

COMPANIONS.

Return, Salome ! Turn, that we may see
The bloom of loveliness that shines in thee.

BRIDE.

Why would you see Salome ? Why with song
And dance would ye attend her steps along ?

VIRGINS (*having withdrawn with the Bride into a pavilion,
they begin to undress her*).

How beautiful thy feet are in thy shoon !
What true proportions all thy limbs attune ;
Set in their sockets—as a workman's care
Sets in their moulding jewels rich and rare.
Thy waist is like a goblet filled with wine ;
Thy body like a heap of wheat, which twine
The freshest lilies ; thy twin breasts appear
Like the twin fawns of the sequestered deer.
Thy graceful neck is to the gazer's eye
Like a fine tower of polished ivory ;
The pools of Heshbon in a cloudless day
Shine clearly, and thine eyes are clear as they ;
Thy nose, so beautifully formed, doth grace
With due proportion thy well-featured face,—
Like the conspicuous tower that stands upon
The jutting crest of lofty Lebanon,
Looking towards Damascus ; on thy neck
Thy head is set like Carmel, which bedeck
Thy braided tresses, with their glossy die,
Rich as the royal purple canopy.
But while the beauties of his queen we sing,
Lo ! in the antechamber waits the King.

•

BRIDEGROOM (*entering the pavilion*).

How fair art thou ! how fashioned for delight !
In loveliness and grace how exquisite !
Like to a palm-tree is thy graceful shape ;
Thy breasts are like the clusters of the grape.
I will the palm-tree in my clasp infold,
And on its boughs will gently lay my hold.
And now thy breasts like clustering grapes will be ;
Thy breath like blossoms of the citron-tree ;
And thy soft speech, that trickles from thy mouth,
Like the sweet vintage of the gushing south.

BRIDE.

Let my speech ever flow for thee like wine,
Soft, sweet, and sparkling—I am wholly thine.
I am my love's, and evermore shall be ;
And my desire is ever towards thee.
Love ! let us now into the country hie,
And in the villages at night we'll lie ;
And in the morning will inspect our vines,
See if the tendril the green stem entwines,
And mark what blossom 'mid the green appears,
What budding promise the pomegranate bears.
With fruit delicious will I thee content,
And mandrake-apples of a pleasant scent.

New fruits and old are hanging near our door,
All which for thee have I laid up in store,
Oh, that thou wert e'en as a little brother,
Sucking the dear breasts of my tender mother !
Then would I go and find thee in the street,
Fearing no scorn, and give thee kisses sweet.
Then would I lead about my precious boy,
And to my mother's house conduct my joy.
Juice of pomegranates, and spice-flavoured wine,
The juice of fruits, my dearest, should be thine.
Under my head his left arm will he place,
Me with his right will tenderly embrace,
Stir not, ye virgins, lest his rest be shaken;
Stir not, I charge you, till himself awaken.

SCENE VII.

BRIDE, VIRGINS, BRIDEGROOM, VINE-DRESSERS.

VIRGINS.

Who cometh from the wild in beauty's sheen,
That, as she walks, doth on her partner lean ?

BRIDEGROOM.

When thou were outcast, and none pitied thee,
I raised thee up beneath this citron-tree ;

Here was it that I raised thee up again,
E'en where thy mother brought thee forth in pain

BRIDE.

Oh! set me as a signet on thy heart,
And on thine arm—thence never more to part.

BRIDEGROOM.

Yea, love is strong as death, strong as the gates
Of Hades—never love its zeal abates;
The darts thereof are as the darts of fire;
Floods cannot quench this vehement desire.
If one for love would all he hath bestow,
He would be scorned—love is not bartered so.

BRIDE.

We have a little sister, small and lean,
In whom no budding womanhood is seen;
When she is spoken of what shall we do,
When the contracted lover comes to woo?

BRIDEGROOM.

She is a wall—and on it there shall be
Two towers of silver for all men to see;
She is a door, and shall be fitly graced
With plates of cedar carefully incased.

BRIDE.


I am a wall, provided with the towers ;
Thine eye smiles on me, and my beauty flowers !
A vineyard in Baal-Hammon has the King ;
He lets it out, and yearly doth it bring
A thousand silver shekels ; mine i' the field
Before me shall to thee like profit yield.
A thousand shekels shall be kept for thee ;
Two hundred more shall for the keepers be.

ONE OF THE VINE-DRESSERS.

Oh ! thou in sweetness all the sweets excelling,
That art within the pleasant gardens dwelling ;
The vine-dressers are listening to thy voice,
Oh ! let me hear it that I may rejoice.

BRIDE.

Make haste, my partner, hasten unto me ;
Be like the fawn and like the roebuck be,
That bounds upon the mountain-tops, where grow
The incense-trees, and where the spices blow.





IDYL VIII.

A SONG OF LOVES.





IDYL VIII.

A SONG OF LOVES.

As the clear water from a shady spring,
Gush from my heart my love-thoughts of the King ;
And as a ready writer's pen, my tongue
Sings Him for ever worthy to be sung.
Fairer than human ! Love and grace divine
Flow in thy mouth—God's blessing ever thine !

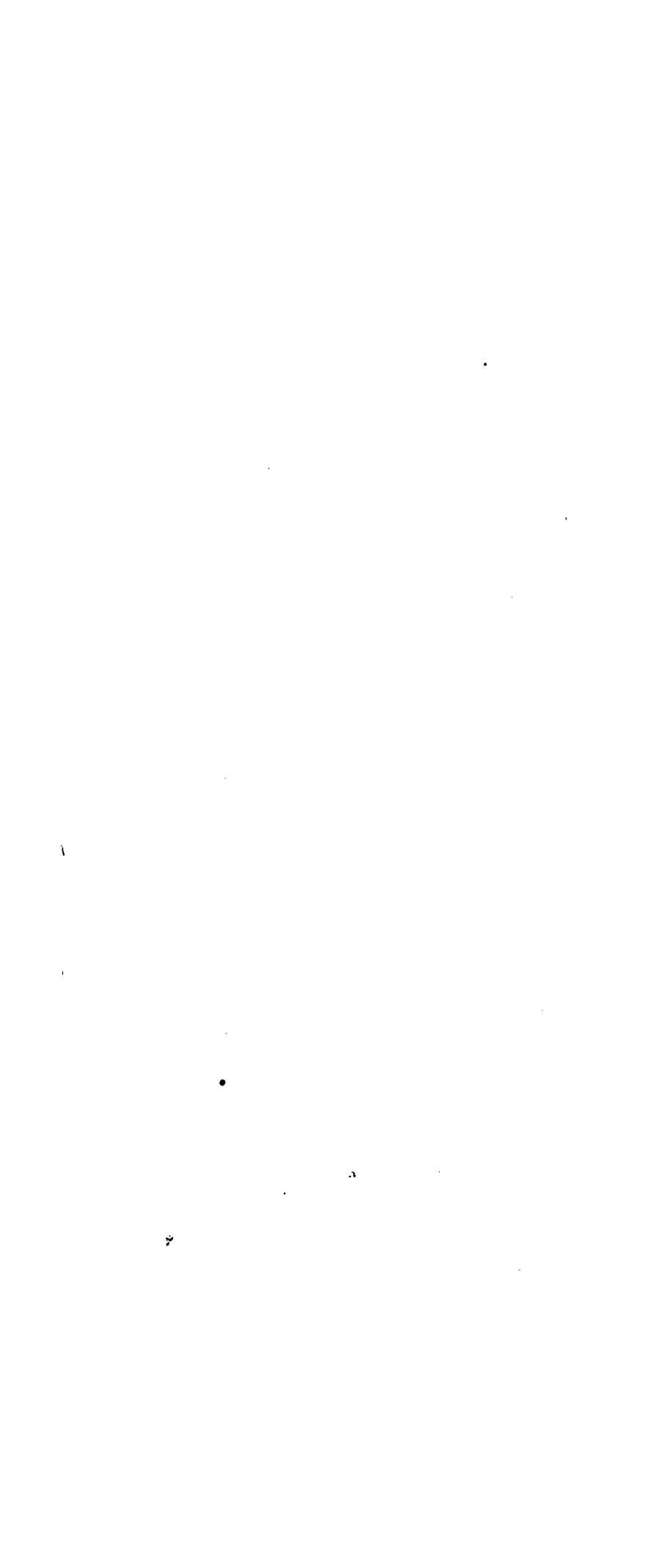
Most mighty ! Gird thy sword upon thy thigh ;
Come with thy glory and thy majesty !
True, meek, and righteous, ride and prosper thou !
And on thy right hand place a Terror now.
Sharp are thine arrows—sharp the Vengeance flies,
And smites before thee all thine enemies.
The sceptre of all power is thine alone ;
Thy throne, O God ! an everlasting throne.

Goodness thou lovest, good is thy delight,
And wickedness is hateful in thy sight;
Therefore on thee doth God, thy God, outpour,
Above thy fellows, gladness evermore.
From ivory palaces young Beauty showers
Odour of spice and quintessence of flowers;
Thy robes are fragrant from the sweets they fling,
And thou art glad because they love their King.
Daughters of kings attend thy royal state,
And in thy presence dutifully wait;
And on thy right hand sits thy chief delight,
The dove-eyed Queen in gold of Ophir bright.

Hearken, O daughter! For thy gracious spouse
Forget thy people and thy father's house.
So shall the King for thee his consort yearn,
Desire thy beauty, and thy love return.
He is thy lord, and thou with graces trim
From his free love derived, must worship Him.
The daughter of proud Tyre shall bring her gift;
In prayer to thee the rich their voices lift.

The daughter of the King is pure and true,
In golden garments radiant to the view.
Dressed in her robes with broidering needles wrought,
She with her virgins shall to thee be brought.
With gladness comes the pomp in royal state,
Enters, rejoicing, at the palace-gate.

From thee shall princely sons derive their birth,
The princes and the governors of earth.
Thine is the glory fails not, nor decays—
Through endless ages everlasting praise !



IDYL IX.

ISHMAEL, THE OUTCAST.

IDYL IX.

ISHMAEL, THE OUTCAST.

Nor thee, Romance! from Yemen's spicy grove,
From Teflis, flowering with the bloom of love,
Or some green island in the sea of sand,
Or from thy haunt in pastoral Samarcand,—
Not thee I call; nor thy enchanting Nine,
Mnemosyne! from their deserted shrine;
Nor nymphs of Solyma: but only Thou,
Pure Spirit! if not inspire, forgive me now.

For now to mortal lyre nor lip is given
To breathe the whispered symphonies of Heaven;
No mantle from a parting prophet falls,
Nor miracle nor sign the time recalls,
When yet from Heaven the fiery Arrow came,
Quickening the seed of sacrificial flame;

When by Immortals mortal earth was trod,
And saint or seer confessed the present God.
The vision comes ! the rapture of the lyre !
In Paran's wild I see the Arab sire :—
But ah ! no murmur of melodious psalms—
No bringing home of Idumean palms !
An outcast pair—a mother and her child,
Lost in the maze, slow stagger through the wild.
Their food has failed ; their water-skin is dry ;
No cloud of promise gathers in the sky.
There is no foot-print in the pathless waste ;
Aloft the vulture hurries by in haste.
No bubbling fountain greets the thirsty ear—
Only themselves and Death and Silence there !
No rock with honey, and no tree with fruit,—
No happy well rewards their vain pursuit.
Where'er they turn, Despair confronts their view—
For them Earth has no boon, and Heaven no dew.

The fainting boy no further can proceed ;
Her strength has failed her in his hour of need ;
Else would she gladly undergo his weight,
And struggle onward with that precious freight.
Not for herself, for only him she fears,
Her own Benoni, child of many tears.
Under the scant shade of a fir she lays
Her beautiful—her hope of other days.

The rising star that on her future shone—
Kindred, and friends, and country all in one—
The only darling of her heart and eyes,
In whom her hopes were garnered—there he lies!
She stoops to kiss him, and she hears his breath,
Slow-hissing, struggle with the creeping death.
She calls her Ishmael's name; has he forgot
His mother's voice? Alas! he hears her not.
In vain she strives to wake his leaden eye—
He sees her not. Oh woe! Oh misery!
"I cannot see him die"—she says, and creeps
A bow-shot off, lifts up her voice, and weeps.

While in the trance of worst-despair she sits,
The spectre of the Past before her flits.
In a few moments Memory spins again
Life's mingled yarn of pleasure and of pain,
Illumes the void with scenes for ever fled,
Restores the lost, and disentombs the dead.
The flowers that graced the cradle of her birth—
The cherished fragrance of the natal earth—
And the sweet beauty of the lotus-isle,
Hallowed by her own mother's tender smile—
The love that all its joys on life confers,
Clings to its dead and haunts their sepulchres—
The natural ties that bind us to our race—
The genius of some love-remembered place—

The hopes that gladdened her where'er she went—
The court of Pharaoh and the Patriarch's tent—
Thoughts, feelings, passions, faces, forms, and things,
And the bright hues of youth's imaginings,
Flash through her mind, and from Oblivion's shroud
Stream clearly out, like sunshine from a cloud.
Thus Memory, with her fantastic shows,
By past joys aggravates our present woes ;
As a bright morning, or a cloudless even,
Dressed in the glories of undying heaven,
Seen from a death-bed, like an evil spell,
Darkens the soul's gloom with intenser hell,
When the sick conscience lays its secrets bare,
And the self-doomed, despairing, hugs Despair,
And the pure light streams on him as a curse,
Comes like a taunt, and makes the dying worse.

To Nature's finest issues touched, endued
With harmonies that humanise the rude,
Incite the sluggish and the wild control,
Melting like dew into the prisoned soul,
Whose music finds us wheresoe'er we rove,
Oh, what an instrument of joy and love
Is woman's heart ! Her love, when truly fixed,
With no alloy of selfish meanness mixed,
Pardon to crime, to pain compassion gives,
Clings to its object though despised he lives,

Submits to scorn, and bends before the strife
It cannot charm, and only ends with life.

“Ah me!” the mother said,—“ah, woeful me!
What slave to gain such freedom would be free?
To roam an outcast, and to die from thirst,
And thus to see my darling perish first!
See how he lies in deathful heaviness—
No hope nor end but death to this distress.
So beautiful! In boyhood’s early prime—
My only one—to die before his time!
Oh, had this trouble fallen on only me,
How gladly had I died, my child, for thee!
How sweet to look into his eye-sheen clear,
And see the light of wild joy laughing there,—
Mark his proud step, and hear his lively voice,
Whose tones of gladness made my soul rejoice,—
Or fondly tell him, sitting hand in hand,
The wondrous legends of my native land—
No more—no more! My darling’s ear is stopped,
My bud of beauty is untimely cropped.
On me depends the weight of this offence;
I should have better taught his innocence.
That fatal scorn—that sting to Sarah’s eyes—
The fault was mine, mine only—and he dies!
Is this thy pryncedom? This the promised line,
Secured from failure by the Power divine?

Oh, piteous pleading of a speechless tongue—
Oh, lamb-like helplessness of one so young !
Our God and Abraham's both sees and hears,
And but for Hagar's sins, would wipe off Hagar's tears."

He hears and sees : he looks upon the boy
He named beside the well of Lahai-roi.
He heard his cry, his speechless panting hears,
And speaks to save him, and to hush her fears :
" What ails thee, Hagar ? Fear not, but arise,
And raise thy son. God heard him where he lies ;
In him a mighty nation will I build."

She hears—the tumult of her soul is stilled.
Her eyes God opens ;—Hagar ! Can it be ?
Behold ! a spring of water welcomes thee.

Who moves unseen in clouds ; unchanged, effects
All changes ; times and their events directs ;
Who made, sustains, impels, and governs all—
Makes Cyrus march, and marks a sparrow's fall ;
Whose eye is fixed, on all his worlds intent ;
Whose hand controls each wheel of government,—
Appointed Ishmael and his destined race,
Settled their bounds, assigned their dwelling-place ?

Philosophy ! That like the obscene bat,
Thick clustering in the rifts of Ararat,
Or halls of Argenk, most dost love the night,
Canst not or wilt not see the living light,

Written with sun-beams in the holy page,—
Behold proud Ishmael in his heritage !
The Asses of the desert mock at thee—
The patient Camel snorts disdainfully—
The Rover of the Waste—his fiery steed—
The Arab memories, deride thy creed.
'Tis not because the scorching sea of sand
No water yields to the invading band ;
'Tis not alone his climate's blazing belt
That guards him from the yoke he never felt—
No ! 'Tis not thus the Arab still is free ;
Thy formularies fail—'twas God's decree.

Proud conqueror ! behold a realm untamed—
A field which no victorious step has shamed—
A race whose pride no master ever broke—
A free-born nation virgin to the yoke !
There let thy mimic lightning fiercely flash,
And there thy impious thunder-fury dash ;
There drive amain thy fortune-guided car ;
There taste the stirring raptures of the war ;
Smite the Arabian with thy laurelled rod,
And try conclusions with the living God !

Ishmael and Isaac now in Hebron meet.
Seek they the cave to shun the noon-tide heat ?
Not from the noon-tide heat they seek its shade—
The Sire of Nations in that cave is laid.

The clay of Abraham before them lies ;
They meet to pay their father's obsequies.
From that dead trunk their living bodies grew ;
Life's stream from that dry fountain either drew.
Both from that common head their lines derive—
But, oh ! how different each derivative !
They meet to part in Phelah's hollow womb,
Their roads diverging from the Patriarch's tomb,
Each to his end ! The orient hues of morn
For this the bed of pain and death adorn ;
That trembles on Al-Sirat's gloomy bridge,
And plunges on the Abysm's billowy ridge :
This is released ; that owes the law his debt ;
From this came Christ, that gendered Mahomet.

Thus from some giant mountain far outspread,
Who in the fleece of waters wraps his head,
Where Asia teemed and teems with many a birth,
The fruitful mother of the tribes of earth,
Two diverse regions meet the traveller's eye,
Stretching apart from that cloud-emperry.
This blooms an Eden, breathing odorous airs ;
To happy eyes its emerald bosom bares ;
And, wanton, scatters rose and violet,
Shewing the beauty none, who see, forget ;
Sweet silver currents flowing soft between
Its gentle slopes, and flower-enamelled green ;

The pastoral quiet and the leafy coves,
Which Peace rejoices in, and Beauty loves.
But on the northern side of huge Beloor,
The realm of danger spreads—the nightly roar
Of savage beasts—and now and then a clan
Of men more fierce than they; 'tis Turkestan!
There stand, as legends tell, the beetling towers
Of Gog and Magog—names of grisly Powers!
Wild region! Like a disused vestige furled
In mouldiness, beyond the living world,
Stretched to the sea of darkness, where the Night
Equal divides the solemn year with Light,
Infolded in her veil of frozen gloom;
Till through the opaque his rising streamers loom,
And his majestic face flashes the snow,
While she shrinks gloomily back and below.
But in the mid space, ere begins the tract
Of indigested dreariness compact,
In tents and villages dwell brutish men,
Fierce as the untamed hyena in her den,
Baschir or Scythian Nomad! Fiends of wrath,
Death and confusion hanging on their path,—
Without religion, by no law restrained,
Their souls in a perpetual winter chained.
The desert Archer, in unfettered pride,
Flourished in Paran, and in Paran died.

Each star to him was a familiar eye
From a kind brow—the dew-dissolving sky.
Soon the dusk shades he, fearless, learned to tread,
And in the forest heaped his leafy bed.
Fast flew his shafts amid the startled game,
And beasts of rapine shrunk where'er he came ;
The subtle serpent trembled from his path,
The raging tiger fled superior wrath ;
The wondering lion paused, then with his hound
Off bounded to some undisputed ground.
All things that creep, or climb, or take the wing,
Or walk, there found, confessed the desert king.
Tents in the waste ! A pastoral village-tree,
And Childhood's merry laughter, frank and free ;
In the bleak dreariness a fairy isle—
A feast of fruits—and woman's glancing smile !
The hunter's cove of comfort there is laid ;
His children sport beneath that sylvan shade.
There his Egyptian wife his toil beguiled ;
There Modab's daughter on her Emir smiled.
There grew his twelve from either fruitful vine,
And each the founder of a mighty line.
His eldest-born, Nebaioth, who shall still
Bring up his rams unto the holy hill ;
Kedar rejoicing in his comely tents,
Which are to him instead of battlements ;

Adbeel and Mibsam, who delight to be
Wild rovers of the sunny Galilee;
Exulting Dumah, whom the threatened Night
With that portentous burden shall affright;
Wise Tema, from whose loins Eliphaz came,
Who saw that Indistinct without a name,
And heard, while crept his flesh, upstood his hair,
The awful words of that articulate Air,
By him reported to the suffering Job,
To Satan then given up to try and probe;
Jetur and Massah in their tameless pride;
Naphish, whose sons for booty ever ride,—
The luckless Frank in some defile trepan,
Or pounce upon some fluttered caravan;
Hadar and Mishma, whose descendants tell
The names attached to every storied well,
Point out the happy stone where Jacob slept,
And shew where Aaron lies, and Rachel wept;
And last Kedemah, lover of the song,
Which, round the nightly fire, his sons prolong;
How the true mother wise Ben Daoud proved,
How Megnoun sung, and how his Leila loved;
Of Ginn or Afrits, and the horrid Kaf,
The scream of anguish and demoniac laugh;
The hall of Eblis, and his fiery throne,
The place of bale, where Hope is never known,

Till, starting at the Terrors which they raise,
They closer cower around the friendly blaze.

From where Day's orient beams on Ormus shine
To the Red Sea, and Syrian Palestine ;
From Khuzestan and Irak's ancient graves,
To Babelmandel on the Indian waves,
Yet dauntless dwell before their brethren's face
The haughty Arab's unsubjected race—
Only of men, of all the tribes that be,
For ever warring and for ever free !
Against the desert-bred Sesostris came—
He came for glory, and retired with shame ;
Against their arms the mighty Cyrus failed ;
Nor Alexander's arrogance prevailed :
His monarch fancies o'er Arabia run ;
He draws his plan—and dies at Babylon.
Gorged with his centuries of blood and crime,
The Roman Eagle dared that dangerous clime ;
The bird of rapine in disordered flight
Confessed the Destiny that tamed his might.
There to her minion Fortune changed her cheer,
And paled the Star of Pompey first with fear.
Gallus in vain his mailed battalia led ;
But few escaped to mourn their many dead ;
Back from the spoil his baffled eagles drew,
While faster than their flight the plague-darts flew.

Imperial Trajan led his host in vain ;
The welkin roars, and whirlwinds tear the plain !
The Archers, riding on the thunder-storm,
With grisly deaths his broken camp deform ;
Compact of sternest stuff, he turns to fly,
For fiercer glares the red wrath of the sky !
Twice from their face, in Heaven-inflicted dread,
The head of Empire, proud Severus, fled.
Still the descendants of the Outcast Boy
The old Arabian liberty enjoy,
Unconquered ever, since it thus was writ
In the great doom-book of the Infinite.

Where a few broken columns only tell
Of arts that flourished once, and sudden fell ;
Where once, the tyrant's City prison-hold,
To wind and wave his grief the captive told ;
What magic spell, what deed of glory wrought,
What tale of passion keeps the pilgrim thought ?
What lends those stones their melancholy grace ?
Whence grew the gray Religion of the place ?
Bright are the isles that crown the Ægean blue,
And sweet the hush of palm-trees bathed in dew ;
And Sadness, like a sceptred shadow, reigns
'Mid storied sepulchres and shattered fanes.
But which of those fair islands, scattered round,
Can stir the heart, and make its pulses bound,

Awake the soul, enkindle, elevate,
Like palmy Patmos, meek and desolate ?

There in the mines, with Patience for his friend,
Contented toiled that Old Man reverend ;
There, in the Spirit uplifted, saw and heard
Visions and Voices—and the living Word !
He saw the wonders in the womb of Time—
The birth, growth, triumph, agony of Crime—
Injustice dominant, exultant Pride,
Truth quenched, and human mortals deified—
The self-willed puppets of the ruling Ill,
Itself a puppet of the Master's will—
The reign of Glory—and the awful day,
When Earth shall melt, the Heavens shall pass away—
And the new Earth and Heavens—and Love's bright gem,
The holy Bride—the New Jerusalem.

From the dark pit he saw a smoke arise,
As from a furnace, darkening all the skies ;
Then from the smoke a cloud of locusts sprung,
With scorpion stings—a cloud that, bursting, flung
Intensest torture, to escape whose proof
Men chose Death rather—but Death glared aloof.
Like horses for the battle armed they seemed ;
In face like men ; their frontlets golden gleamed ;
Adown their pomp of hair like women's flowed ;
Jaws horrible with lions' teeth they shewed ;

Hurtled their wings, like chariots driven amain
By fiends of battle o'er the bloody plain ;
Upon their breasts an iron Horror frowned ;
But in their stings their chiefest power was found ;
An age and half an age their sway's full date ;
Their king, Abaddon, sitting in his gate !

This woe is passed : another trumpet-sound—
“ Loose the four Angels in Euphrates bound.”
The multitudinous outbursting wrath
Of horsemen now devoured their cruel path ;
Their breastplates Sulphur, Hyacinth, and Fire,
Flashing before them many-coloured ire ;
Steeds lion-headed, from whose mouths outbroke
Volleys immense of brimstone, fire, and smoke.
Tremendous devastation ! Monstrous dread !
Each with a tail, and every tail a head ;
Like Amphisbæna, moving either way,
With sting to poison, and with bite to slay.

Ishmael and his Adopted these ; the flame
From the Arabian wildness grew and came.
From the unbottomed pit the poisonous fume
Rose—an inordinate, death-pregnant gloom,
Infecting, far and near, hills, vales, and plains,
And filling all their life with hideous blains,
The plague no power of man could e'er control,
The leprosy that eats into the soul !

In Hara's hollow side and horrid shade
Who skulking hides, as of the light afraid?
Some cowering wretch the outraged laws affright?
A homicide—or holy eremite?
The law-giver of half the world is there;
A Warrior and a Counsellor of Fear;
A hermit, who a heavenly mission claims,
Yet mocks the Holy, and His Word defames;
The chief and mightiest of a mighty race,
Arabia's greatest glory and disgrace;
In Hara's cave he weaves his artful net
To snare the souls of men—'tis Mahomet!

The arch Impostor first his wife deceives;
The house of generous Hashem next believes;
In a few years Arabia is his own,
And hell's Incarnate builds a monarch's throne.
Conquest, and Spoil, and Power confirm his lies—
Undoubted to the last, the Prophet dies.
To man's ill passions skilfully addressed,
His Koran lives—his pestilent bequest.
O'er the dark bridge the faithful and the brave
Must pass—but see! Beyond the darkness wave
Lights from pavilions hid in odorous green,
And Beauty glancing in a fairy scene.
Immortal music soothes the raptured ear;
And fountains, scattering perfume, murmur near.

Undying pleasures bless the happy sight,
Ambrosial viands, gardens of delight;
From whose green alleys in the wanton dance
The bright-limbed virgins amorous advance;
No! Not from clay were formed those shapes of light,
So languishingly soft—spiritually bright!
Upon whose cheeks, clear-shining as they move,
Blossoms the crimson of consenting love;
In the dark heaven of whose enchanting eyes
Sparkles the soft desire that never dies;
Whose hyacinthine tresses scatter rose,
And every sweet the vernal airs disclose.
What Arab fears in Mahomet's defence
To die—and gain his paradise of sense?

Loud shouts of triumph shake the battle-field:
“Ye Christian dogs! Ye Jews and Sabians, yield!
Filth of the earth, and hatred of the sky,
Profess the faith of Mahomet—or die.”
On rush the frantic Moslem to their prey,
And fiends of Horror pioneer their way.
The Caliph's banner floats unto the wind;
Death stalks before it now, and now behind.
Damascus falls before the fiery band,
The son of Ishmael wins the holy land:
Well may the Patriarch in his anguish groan,
For Omar builds his mosque on Jacob's stone.

Next Tyre and Tripoli his power obey,
And Egypt owns the fierce Arabian's sway.
Fanatic flames round lettered piles arise,
And burn the glory of the Ptolemies.
From Tigris to Euphrates all is theirs;
Now Khorasan their prophet's name reveres;
Then Mawaralnhar, and the realms of Ind,
And all the region of the vast Al Sind;
Nor spares their venomous sting the dewy Peace,
Soft-nestled in the golden Chersonese.
Ye nymphs of Georgia, veil your captive shames!
Weep for your daughters, ye Circassian dames!
Romantic Spain! lament thy tempting groves,
Thy face of beauty, and thy bloom of loves.
The Arab wooes thee with a lion's grasp;
And holds thee firmly with a lover's clasp;
Alhambra's lines of ruined beauty tell
How much he loved thee—and adorned how well!
The scarlet City feared her time was come,
And dread congealed the heart of Christendom;
But Charles, the Hammer, tamed the dangerous scorn
Of the Eastern Antichrist—and broke his horn.

The banks of Tigris now the Caliph frets
With Bagdad's towers, and mosques, and minarets;
The seat of Empire from Arabia moves,
And with a nerveless court his camp reproves.

Who like a simple shepherd lived of late,
Now apes the weak Byzantian's silken state ;
And, won by gew-gaws, quits essential power
For royal pomp and aromatic bower ;
The prophet's mantle for a feathery fan—
The sword of office for the soft divan.
The haughty Arab in his wild remains,
Nor will defend the pageant he disdains.
What hireling valour can supply his place ?
What mercenaries match the native race ?
The sons of Victory, never known to yield,
Forsake the Caliph and his battle-field.
Who now the Tartar's fiery edge rebates ?
Who keeps the Turk within the Caspian gates ?
Yet a brief light of song and science showers
Its lustre on the proud imperial towers ;
And grateful Europe still a wreath decrees
Of honour to the dead Abassides.

Empires have risen and ceased ; where'er we range
We see the ruins of defacing Change.
Some mighty Babylon, that swells to-day,
Still puts the mock on that renowned decay.
Let Balbec speak, or let Palmyra tell
Who failed to keep them, or who built them well.
The voiceless eloquence of roofless walls—
The fox that litters in imperial halls—

The marble skeletons—the reptile stir
In columned fane or ruined theatre—
The toad where beauty smiled or beauty wept—
The newt soft-gliding where Zenobia slept—
Corruption and the worm, to flesh allied—
The ghosts of Empire, sneer at human pride.
Empires have changed, will change, and change again ;
The Arabs, still unchanged, their place maintain.
The Caliph must his broken sceptre rue—
But Ishmael fears not Tartar Hulaku.

Now from the cradle of the Parthian name
Had grown the terror of a fiercer fame.
In Nesa's pasture, where the Gihon flows,
On Mahan's plain the dreadful monster rose.
Onward he rushes, foaming, from his lair ;
Flash his red eyes, and streams his horrent hair.
Earth reels where'er he sets his cloven stamp ;
Olympus trembles at his awful tramp ;
Mæandar shudders in his wanton twines ;
His roar has shattered down th' Ephesian shrines ;
He tumbled Smyrna with a furious yell ;
By his assault Laodicea fell ;
His hoof has trod the pride of Sardis down ;
And Thyatira lost her maiden crown ;
From Pergamus he stripped her virgin dress,
And in her temples left his filthiness.

But like a palm-tree in the desert sweep,
Or like a column 'mid a ruinous heap,
A well-kept watch-tower on a lonely hill,
True Philadelphia stands—and virgin still.

Death his attendant, Terror in the van,
Onward careers the savage Turcoman.
An Eden blossoms lovely to the wind
Before him—and he leaves a waste behind.
Till Timur of the cruel heart and hand
Comes, like a rival pest, from Samarcand.
The Turkish Bajazet, with bootless rage,
Like a chained eagle, beats his iron cage.
The lord of nations, not of his desires,
The Tartar to extended sway aspires;
He spoils, slays, tortures, desolates, and burns;
And stains the green of earth where'er he turns;
Four towers of human skulls recall the man,
Raised in his capital, proud Damogan.
So lived he, and so died—upon his way
To widow unoffending meek Cathay.
Yet has our England listened to the praise
Of Timur—favourite theme of other days;
Nor is our England guiltless of his crime,
Blood-guiltiness, in that far Eastern clime,
Where Avarice has led the battle on,
And Courage oft has gold and laurels won;

And English steel more Indian souls has slain
Than English zeal has gained—or sought to gain.

Back the tenth wave of Turkish fury pours;
Louder and louder yet the tempest roars.
Of what avail one brave Epirot's arm?
The din of battle brays with wild alarm.
The Turkish banners o'er Ionia wave;
Byzantium shakes, nor Scanderbeg can save.
In vain the worthiest of his name and line
Stands in the breach—the latest Constantine!
The Christian Powers their needful aid withhold;
His subjects for the Moslem hoard their gold.
The cloud of fire and brimstone fiercely peals;
The Euxine trembles and Propontis reels.
Now through the gap the tide of conquest streams;
Where shone the Cross, the baleful Crescent gleams;
The rude Barbarian swells in his kiosk,
And Saint Sophia is a naked mosque.
There for his written time the Turkish Lord
Maintains the stern religion of the sword;
The delegate of Ishmael still retains
The sceptre, and the dead Arabian reigns.

Amid the wrecks of Empire, still unchanged,
The Arab ranges where his fathers ranged.
As 'mid the roar of waters stands a rock,
O'ertops the surge, and scorns the crested shock;

Like the tall pillar that o'erlooks the Moor,
The Ishmaelite, disdainful, stands secure.
Nor Greek, nor Roman, nor the Tartar Khan—
Nor Parthian, Persian, nor the Turcoman,
Has ever turned a Master's kindling eye
Over the sandy wolds of Araby.
Some few have found the joy that Conquest yields,
For a brief space, in Yemen's flowery fields;
But Ishmael's nation never bowed the neck
To Conqueror's footstep or a tyrant's beck.
Oft for their spoil the Centaur-robbers roam;
But still Arabia is the Arab's home;
Still is he seen with glistening eye to trace
Each spot that keeps the record of his race;
Still does he hold in legendary lore
The names and fortunes of his sires of yore;
For him each Syrian flower that blooms and dies—
Stream, hill, and stone are kindred memories;
Still does he haunt the dead and sinful sea,
The hill of Jebus, lake of Galilee;
To Belka's pasture loves his flock to drive,
And keeps in Paran Ishmael's name alive.



IDYL X.

LAMENT FOR SAUL AND JONATHAN.

IDYL X.

LAMENT FOR SAUL AND JONATHAN.

THE blood of Israel's beauty slain
Upon the hills has left a stain :
Ah, sight of shame ! Ah, day of woe !
How are the mighty fallen low !

Oh, be it told in Gath by none,
Nor in the streets of Askelon,
To fill with joy, while we repine,
The daughters of the Philistine.

Hills of Gilboa ! Drop of dew,
Or shower of rain ne'er fall on you ;
Nor bud, nor flower, nor any green
Upon your blighted slopes be seen !

For there on that disastrous day
The Warrior's shield was thrown away—
The shield of the anointed Saul,
As though he were no king at all.

From men of might, whose life-blood ran,
Swerved not the bow of Jonathan.
The sword of Saul made heaps of slain—
Saul never raised his sword in vain.

Lovely they lived, and loving ever,
Nor death itself did them dis sever.
Swifter they were than eagles' flight,
Stronger than lions in the fight.

Daughters of Israel! weep for Saul—
Oh, weep for him, who graced you all
With scarlet robes, and golden rings,
And gems, and other precious things.

How are the mighty fallen low!
Distressed beyond the common woe,
I mourn my friend—the kindest, best,
The faithfullest and pleasantest!

I never heard of love like thine,
And never man lost friend like mine;
No woman ever loved a man
As thou didst me, my Jonathan!

How is the place of Warriors void,
The weapons of the war destroyed!
Ah, sight of shame! Ah, day of woe!
How are the mighty fallen low!

IDYL XI.

TOBIAS AND. THE ANGEL.

IDYL XI.
TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL.

Proud and luxurious Nineveh ! And thou
 Ecbatana ! Ye palace-homes of kings !
Where are your royalties and glories now,
 Your marble halls and solemn banquetings ?
Where are your ruins ? From the sapless bough
 Of the dead tree no living verdure springs ;
But still the bard and his enduring song
Outlast the sounds the world hath echoed long.

The mighty Nineveh is but a name !
 Ecbatana once was ! Hushed is the stir
Of busy life, and closed their lists of fame ;
 No more are heard the lute and dulcimer ;
Scandal is silent and censorious blame ;
 Man, woman, silver, gold, silk, minever,
Are all confounded in the same decay,
Resumed into the common mother's clay.

Ashes to ashes ! Dust to dust ! O Earth !

Most miserable mother ! Bow thy head ;
Thou quakest with the pang of giving birth,
And thy rent side receives again thy dead ;
Stern Death of victims never finds a dearth,
And thy sweet bosom ever makes his bed ;
Unhappy mother thou ! whose teeming womb
Must be thy progeny's reluctant tomb.

While yet those cities of the dead with life

Were full, and life's lust, vanity, and crime ;
And on their busy scenes appeared the strife
'Twixt good and bad, the mean and the sublime,
A man of Nineveh espoused a wife
From that Ecbatana who, for a time
Loved of a fiend, had seven times married been,
And was not yet a wife—to her chagrin.

Tobias is our bridegroom, son of Tobit,

Of all the Jewish exiles best—and blindest ;
For mother Nature, if you choose to probe it,
With that same milk wherewith she feeds the kindest,
Darkens the wit ; good nature, though you robe it
In brightest hues, is weakness ; but thou findest,
False siren, Beauty ! though thou ever prizest
Wealth above wit, the blind side of the wisest.

But blindness fell on him from what men call
An accident, though the true sage denies
That Chance can ever be, and holds that all
Our haps are providences in disguise ;
For, while he slept, some sparrows in the wall
Quietly muted in his open eyes.
But since his wife would sometimes talk past bearing,
Old Tobit could have better spared his hearing.

Life is a tenure (every tinker knows it),
Bound by a mortgage surly Death doth hold,
Who, as it falls due, hastens to foreclose it ;
Him nor mandragora can lull, nor gold
Bribe to delay ; he has his warrant, shews it,
Ejects the tenant, and corrupts the mould—
A banquet for his worms, which soon begin it,
As though no soul had ever dwelt within it.

Tobit, old, blind, and pothered by his spouse,
Began to look for death as a true friend
That sure exemption from life's ills allows,
Whatever may succeed them when those end,
And the new world's Apparitor shall rouse
The tranced soul, and to its station send,
To the sad dreariness of bale and ban,
Or to the flowery fields Elysian.

Thinking of death, and wishing ere he died
To settle his accounts, and leave them square,
(Worse than a heathen, who doth not provide
Sufficient riches for his son and heir !)
He sent his young Tobias with a guide
For a deposit left in Gabael's care—
Two thousand *plus* two hundred pounds and fifty—
A decent fortune for a Jew-boy thrifty.

He gave him excellent advice at parting,
Which certainly his son gave heed to, sly as
Youth ever is with Age ; and tears were starting
In Anna's eyes, who prayed for her Tobias,
Her heart with grief, with rheum her eyelids smarting,
When with Azarias, son of Ananias,
Her darling went the Median's land to roam—
She would have rather kept him close at home.

O thou that hast one, love thy tender mother !
Her name be as a sacred amulet
Worn on thy bosom ! Never can another
Love as she loveth thee ; does she not fret,
And pine, when thou art sad ? Can sister, brother,
Spouse, friends, replace her ? Ha ! thy cheek is wet,
Thou *hadst* a mother ! keep her image nigh thee,
And think of her oft as the world shall try thee.

Tobias with his guide soon reached the river,
Far-flowing Tigris, from whose pleasant brim
He sprang to bathe him, when, with a cold shiver,
He saw a water-monster, huge and grim,—
How could the frightened youth himself deliver
From the prodigious fish that threatened him?
He, half-unconscious, at his guide's command,
Seized his dread foe, and threw him on the land.

His friendly guide then bade him, standing nigh him,
The heart, the liver, and the gall take out,
And put up safely, and, this done—to fry him :
And then they ate him, which the youth no doubt
Thought pleasanter than being eaten by him.
Thus even-handed Justice brings about
Her righteous ends, which are to slay the slayer,
Abase the proud, and prey upon the preyer.

When they resumed their way, Tobias asked
What was the use of the heart, liver, gall
Of the strange fish. “ Whatever spirit, tasked
To vex a mortal by the king of all
Ill spirits, howsoever quaintly masked,
In street, green field, in chamber, or in hall,
Whene'er or of the liver or the heart
We make a smoke, he must forthwith depart.

And if a man has whiteness in his eyes,
The gall, smeared on them, gives him sight again.”
Thus answered him Azarias the wise,
Not thinking it beneath him to explain,
As doctors with their solemn mysteries,
Knowing at heart that all their art is vain.
Man’s prudence, wisdom, science are but folly—
And his philosophy mere melancholy.

But merrily the pair pursued their way,
Discoursing cheerfully of this and that,
Till, at the close of a bright shining day,
They saw before them, and they joyed thereat,
The walls and domes of proud Ecbatana,
Whereon Azarias turned at once his chat,
Without circumlocution—the sly dodging,
Called *sounding* one—to supper and a lodging.

“ For thy hereafter and our present good
We’ll lodge with thy relation, Raguël ;
A foolish man may travel many a rood,
And leave his good behind him ; ’tis not well ;
Thy kinsman has a daughter—flesh and blood
Are well attempered in this Bonnibell ;
Sarah, the darling of her father’s eyes,
Is young and fair, and, for a woman—wise.

Hear me, Tobias ; while with him we tarry,
I to her father will discourse anent
Thy marriage with the maid, whom none must carry,
But only thou ; for by the law's intent
She is thy wife ; her should thy kinsman marry
To other man, it were a pestilent
Folly in him—an unwise resolution—
A breach of the Mosaic Institution.”

The young man liked it not, and gravely said :

“I’ve heard a wicked spirit doth affect her,
And kills whoever cometh to her bed,
But harms not any man that doth neglect her.
Although she be fair, young, and wise, I dread
Encounter with her, lest that fierce Inspector
Slay me, too, in the marriage chamber, even
As he has slain, they say, already seven.

Some years, good brother, would I rather borrow

From the long sleep than die before my time ;
What boots to wed to-day, and ere to-morrow
Become insensible to the sweet clime
Around us—subject of my father’s sorrow,

And to the greedy earthworm’s filthy slime ?
His parents can their only one condemn
To be without a child to bury them ?”

Azarias answered; "Dost thou make objection

Only because thou fearest her bed-keeper ?

Let pleasant thoughts o'errule that sad reflection ;

When one may laugh, why should he be a weeper ?

Yield to the instinct of thy new affection,

That now creeps o'er you as the dark green creeper
Round a tree's shaft. Thou hast no cause to dread her—
This very night thou shalt both wed and bed her.

Cannot the Good One make the shrewd Dispenser

Of ills desist from troubling her and thee ?

This Asmodæus, though a cunning fencer,

Shall by a little smoke be forced to flee.

Some of the heart and liver on a censer,

With prayers from both of you, shall set her free.

Fear not; ye shall be happy with each other ;

I think, moreover, she shall be a mother."

Tobias knew not why it should be so,

Nor how it was ; but suddenly he felt

His young blood in a livelier current flow,

His heart beat sensibly under his belt,

While came all over him a strange sweet glow,

Like one whose thoughts to dreamy softness melt,

And whose charmed soul round one loved Image lingers,

When he is magnetised by loving fingers.

'Tis certain marriages are made in heaven,
By sure appointment some, some by permission ;
The fleshly pulp requires the marriage-leaven,
To bring the soul within to ripe condition
For heaven or t'other place. To few is given
A blest and holy union in partition.
But as they brew, the pair their bread must bake ;
And lie, perforce, upon the bed they make.

In love at first sight I believe—the chain
That draws two bodies, hearts, and souls together—
Eye-spells that charm us for our good or bane—
The mystic sympathy—the secret tether,
Which, fastened once, doth evermore restrain
The captive, whether fair or foul the weather ;
Is it, or not, *Electrical Attraction*
That makes 'twixt souls this sympathetic paction ?

A man may love an Image—some fair Thought,
Bright as the dew-drop on the coronet
Of young Aurora—some Idea wrought
By minister of good or ill, and set
Deep in his mind—a star-like sparkle brought
From a far world ; can he that shape forget ?
Take this one instance (I could name a dozen)—
Tobias fondly loved his unseen cousin.

That eve he saw her—and he loved her more ;
The sight of the beloved feeds love in sooth.
It chanced the maid received them at the door,
Fair as Rebekah, modest as sweet Ruth.
But Raguël with eager eyes ran o'er
The goodly features of the stranger youth,
And said : “ How like this youthful stranger here
Is to my cousin Tobit, Edna dear ! ”

And then he asked : “ Whence come ye ? ” They replied :
“ From Nineveh—sons of the Nephthalim,
That dwell there captives.” “ Tell me, then, nor hide
Your knowledge ; know ye Tobit ? Saw ye him ?
How is he ? ” “ Know we him ? ” Tobias cried ;
“ He is my father, but his days are dim,—
His eyes without light.” Up the old man leapt,
And kissed, and blessed his cousin's son, and wept.

Wept, too, his wife and daughter. Then was spread
The table ; and a firstling of the flock
Was killed for them. With wine, and meat, and bread
They cheered themselves. Nor Love forgot to knock
And prompt Tobias, whereupon he said,
“ Azarias, put not on me now a mock,
But speak of what you talked upon the way,
And let the matter be despatched, I pray.”

Azarias smiled, and then he talked aside

With Raguël. The father called the youth,
And said, "Thy right, my son, is not denied,

But listen calmly, while I tell the truth;
Seven men have wedded her, and strangely died

Soon as they touched her bed. It were in sooth
A woeful sight to see thee perish so."

He said; "Let her be mine for weal or woe."

Quoth Raguël; "Since thou persistest, take her,

And mayst thou have in all things good success;
And may no fearful visitation shake her

And us, with thy loss bringing us distress;
And may our gracious Lord and Father make her
Fruitful, and give you both much happiness."

He blessed them both as man and wife, and went,
And wrote, and sealed the marriage-instrument.

And Edna gently led her daughter meek

Into the bridal chamber, disarrayed her,
And kissed the tears from off her lovely cheek,

And in the marriage-bed she weeping laid her,
And softly said, "Fair weather after bleak

Comes in its turn;" and tearfully she prayed her
To cheer herself; "My child! for this thy sorrow
God give thee blessing and a joyful morrow."

Tobias, having faith in the direction

His guide had given him, on a censer laid,
Wherein were embers, a sufficient section
Both of the liver and the heart, which made
An efficacious smoke. Drug, nor confection,
Nor holy water, nor the zealous aid
Of monk or abbot with the book and bell,
E'er put to flight a cunning fiend so well.

Baffled and vanquished by the fumigation,

That in his nostrils was no pleasant smell,
The wicked Asmodæus (of the nation
Of evil spirits, who are wont to dwell,
Unseen, yet in familiar conversation
With youths, suggesting thoughts I must not tell),
Soon as the smoke in Sarah's chamber found him,
To Egypt fled, and there the Angel bound him.

The bridegroom and his bride were left alone :

He said ; " Dear sister, rise, and let us pray ;"
And thus he prayed ; " Thou, to whom thoughts are known,
God of our fathers ! Let thy creatures pay
Thee pleasing adoration, to thy throne
Let prayers and praises ever find their way.
Thou madest Adam, and to cheer his life
Thou gavest him a stay and help—a wife.

And thou didst say, when he was newly made,
‘It is not good that man should be alone,—
Let us make one like to himself, an aid
Unto the man.’ Be now thy mercy shewn
To me and to my wife.” This wise he prayed,
And Sarah said “Amen.” He with his own
Help-meet and wife slept safely through the night—
Both safely, sweetly slept till next day’s light.

But Raguël arose and made a grave,
Saying, “I fear lest he be also dead.”
And, anxious for his kinsman frank and brave,
He sadly to his wife, good Edna, said :
“I fear lest this good youth, to whom I gave
Our daughter, lie a corse within her bed ;
Send now a maid to see, and bid her shew it,
That we may bury him, and no man know it.”

The handmaid went, and found them both asleep,
And came and told them that he was alive.
The hearts of both with truest joy did leap,
Because their daughter as a wife should thrive,
And with her spouse the feast of marriage keep,
And all the joys of wedlock take and give.
Old Raguël dismissed grief, doubt, and pain—
And bade his servants fill the grave again.

Nor in his joy did he forget to praise

And bless the Joy-giver. The feast he kept
Not seven—the usual time—but fourteen days.

And cheerfully they told how Sarah wept,
Thinking of that ill spirit's wicked ways,

And how they smoked him out, and sweetly slept,
And how this wedding—so unlike the past—
Was now complete, and she a wife at last.

Happy Tobias ! Happy all so suited

With sweet young helps ! Hail, wedded bliss ; who
knows it

Is truly happy ; let the wretch imbruted

With lust and pride prefer his lonely closet—
He is a wretch ! Our happy man deputed

His guide to get from Gabael the deposit.
That worthy faithfully restored the wealth,
And came to drink the hopeful couple's health.

Meanwhile old Tobit counted every day,

And when the time for their return was passed,
And yet they came not, mournfully did say ;

“Are they detained ? Has Gabael gone at last
The way of flesh ; and is there none to pay

The money ?” Anna, likewise, was downcast,
And fretted for her absent son, and said ;

“I care for nothing now ; my son is dead.”

“Nay, he is well,” said Tobit; “Nay, is dead,”

Said Anna, nor a day she missed to look
The way he went; nor in the day-time fed
On any meat, nor slept o’ nights, but took
Grief to her bosom, till at last Hope fled;
The palsy of despair the mother strook;
Her soul was dark, no light was in her heart,
Nor would the spectre from her eyes depart.

But when the feast of fourteen days was o’er,
Tobias would no longer be delayed.
Homeward his treasure—wife and gold—he bore;
Nor on the journey tarried they; but made
What haste they could. Behold the domes once more
Of Nineveh—the rich—the doomed! whose trade
Was harlotry—the drunk with blood, whose breath
Was poison of hot lust—whose kiss was death!

Azarias said; “Now leave thy wife behind
To follow us, and take with thee the gall;
Thereby shall light return unto the blind,
And from thy father’s eyes the darkness fall;
When thou dost meet him only bear in mind
To smear his eyes therewith; then either ball
Shall have its sight again, and he shall see
At once the light of day, his wife, and thee.”

Now Anna sat and kept her longing eyes
Fixed on the way, in that oft-spied direction
Her son should come—when with a glad surprise
She saw her boy. Love waits not for reflection,
But like an instinct aye doth energise
The heart, and prompts to action. Her affection
Gave her new life, and running forth, she cried,
“Tobit! Thy son is coming with his guide.”

On her son's neck the mother fell and wept,
And said, “My son! I am content to die
Since I have seen thee.” And blind Tobit stept
Toward the door and stumbled; but, then nigh
His father, to his arms Tobias leapt,
Embracing him, and on each clouded eye
He smeared the gall, and said; “My father! cheer
Thy heart within thee; something good is near.”

Then smarted Tobit's eyes; he rubbed and pressed them,
And from them passed away the drear dark cloud.
He saw and hugged his son and wife; caressed them,
Kissed them; looked joyously, as one endowed
With a new sense; and Him above, who blessed them,
From a full heart he praised with accents loud.
The deepest joy like sorrow oft appears—
Those happy three enjoyed their gush of tears.

With a free step and his recovered light
Tobit went to the city-gate to meet
His son's wife ; seeing that the blind had sight,
The people marvelled ; but he walked the street,
Rejoicing, praising God. His face was bright
From inward gladness—did his heart not beat
With a new life ? Oh, exquisite emotion,
When joy is gratitude, and love devotion !

The second marriage festival was over—

The guests were gone—nor Anna, though she tried,
In her son's wife could any fault discover ;
And he was not yet weary of his bride,
A husband of a month, and still a lover !
Thrice happy those, with silken tether tied,
Whether they sleep on bed of down or heather,
Whom love, not lust, nor pelf, has brought together !

Then Tobit to Tobias said ; “ My son,

His wages pay the guide, and give him more.”

Tobias answered ; “ Father, he hath done

Much worthy service ; did he not restore
Thy sight, and make that evil spirit run

From Sarah, without whom I should be poor ?
His due is half of what I brought with me.”

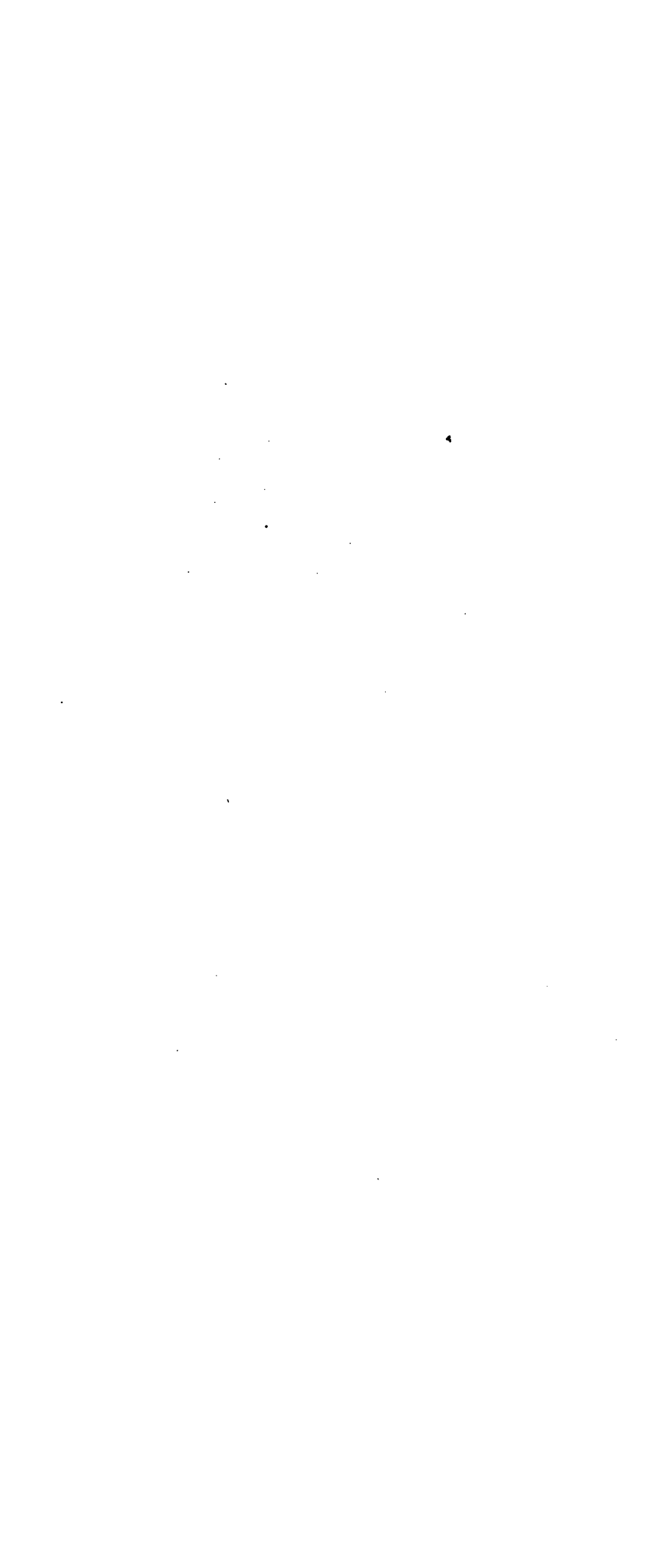
And Tobit said, “ My son, I think with thee.”

Then called Azarias, and he bade him take
Half of the treasure, and depart in peace.
He took them both apart, and thus he spake ;
 “ Bless and praise God, who giveth all increase,
And takes away ; whose law if men forsake,
 They lose themselves ; be diligent, nor cease
To praise him for the mercies he hath shewn.
Keep a king’s secret, make God’s goodness known.

Do good, and evil shall not harm you. Prayer
Is good with fasting, alms, and righteousness.
Much without righteousness brings only care
And woe ; a little doth suffice to bless
The righteous man. But alms sure blessings are ;
 Who sheweth mercy shall receive no less ;
’Tis better to give alms than lay up gold ;
The bold in sin against themselves are bold.

There be seven Angels, unto whom ’tis given
To bring the prayers of saints before the Throne,
Who, testifying of their good in heaven,
Go in and out before the Holy One ;
I Raphael am, one of the holy Seven.”
Before the Angel both the mortals prone
Fell on their faces, for they greatly feared.
That sweet voice then their troubled spirits cheered ;

“Praise God, and fear not; let his goodness fill
Your hearts for ever; all his worlds acclaim
His Majesty! I came down by His will
To heal both thee and Sarah; praise His Name.
But now I hasten to the holy hill,
And to the happy seat from whence I came,
To wait submit before the Holy One;
Fear not, and rise!” They rose—but he was gone.



IDYL XII.

JUDITH.

/



IDYL XII.

JUDITH.

Is woman but a plaything for soft hours ?

A pretty toy for intervals of leisure ?

A thing to dally with on beds of flowers ?

A soulless shape that to a Lydian measure

Moves wantonly, when, canopied with bowers,

Man steeps his soul in enervating pleasure ?

An idol made a life-like form to don ?

A mere voluptuous automaton ?

Or else a paragon ? An incarnation

Of archetypal Beauty ? Soul o' the Light,

That flashed into the dreary desolation

Of Chaos and the stagnant depths of Night,

When spake the Voice, and by the Word Creation

Proceeded ? Did the dreamer see aright


When he beheld her of the sea-foam born,

The primogenial angel of the Morn ?

Man was not of empyreal substance made,
But from the clay of earth, and from his side
Was woman taken for his help and aid—
Subject, as to the Bridegroom is the Bride—
In somewhat less of majesty arrayed,
But with sweet graces of her own supplied ;
Differing so far, that he was from the clod,
And she from him then breathed into by God.

Love is her province, and whate'er the tie
That claims affection, true to love is she ;
Yet can she, sometimes, lay her softness by,
Stern in resolve, unconquerably free,
Suffer for conscience, for her country die,
Or for her loved a willing victim be.
Such virtues as the stars of Memory shine—
My song is of a Hebrew heroine.

Ecbatana was now no more ; afar
Gleamed the fierce terrors of the Assyrian throne ;
The Monarch rode in Conquest's cruel car ;
From black and crimson clouds his glory shone,
And prostrate Nations owned him god of war ;
But of the Infinite Essential One
The Jewish remnant had a wholesome thought—
Whene'er there was a battle to be fought.



Danger hung o'er them ; their Assyrian Lord
Sent his lieutenant to chastise their pride.
Him as a god his other thralls adored,
But those rebellious scatterlings denied
Faith to his banner, homage to his sword.
Most of all gods the mortal deified,
The tyrant, to his own religion true,
Exacts the homage which he deems his due.


Perched in the pride of place, a silly gander
Is taken for an eagle. Power transmutes
Man into superhuman—the Commander
Of all the Faithful is whate'er it suits
His majesty to be—an Alexander,
Or his step-father Ammon ; men are brutes,
And with a flattery of well-bred apes
Worship the Serpent in a thousand shapes.

But Holofernes, at the king's command,
Remorselessly and with an iron rod
Was bruising the revolts ; his ruthless band
On the defenceless as on reptiles trod ;
And those who bravely fought them hand to hand
Lay weltering on or underneath the sod.
Now in the holy land their tents were pight—
Who could resist their overwhelming might ?

O Earth ! O Heaven ! That hateful War should be
Without a gag—permitted to run riot,
Finding in groans his merriment and glee,
Polluting Innocence, and strangling Quiet ;
Carnage his banquet, and his drink a sea
Of blood—a mammoth let loose at the fiat
Of a man-god, who by a word, a breath,
Scatters abroad crime, desolation, death !

The mighty Holofernes heard with blended
Anger and scorn that armed men the defile
Guarded ; the gloom upon his brow portended
A shower of blood, and with the wintry smile
That Greatness shews whenever 'tis offended,
Or suffers from an overflow of bile,
Or from a lack of it, he bade them call
The chiefs of Chanaan, and addressed them all ;—

“ Ye sons of Chanaan, tell me now, who be
This people the hill country occupying,
Who yield them not, nor from my presence flee,
But keep the passages, my might defying ?
What makes them thus bold in resisting me,
What king obeying, on what force relying ?
Their cities, strongholds, their munition, strength
Of men for battle,—tell me at full length.”



The chief of Ammon's sons then made reply,
Wise Achior ; " Mighty lord, be not offended,
But hear thy servant ; I will tell no lie ;
The people of this country are descended
From the Chaldeans, but were forced to fly
From Ur to Charran, for they never bended
Knee to their father's gods, faithful and true
Unto the God of heaven, the God they knew.

There dwelt they for a time, till His command
Brought them to Chanaan, where they long had rest,
Until a famine came upon the land,
From which they found, when grievously distrest,
Refuge in Egypt ; there the little band
Grew to a multitude, but were opprest
With bitter slavery, until at last
That grinding tyranny was overpast.

Their God smote Egypt, when to Him they cried,
With plagues incurable ; and the Red Sea,
The way of their escape, for them He dried ;
And in the wilderness of Sinai He
Was with them, strengthened them on every side,
And made before them in confusion flee
The tribes of Chanaan, and on them bestowed
This happy region for a sure abode.

While they were loyal, all with them was well;
But when disloyal, all with them was ill;
With Him they prospered, but without Him fell—
Bruised, broken, scattered. Following His will,
All opposites they could resist, smite, quell,
Destroy,—not doing so, their holy hill
Was taken, marred, and smoking on the ground
The wrecks of city and temple lay around.

Themselves were made, perforce, unwilling rangers
Into far lands of which they nothing knew,
And for a time were captive held of strangers;
But now restored, they do again renew
Trust in their God, and will outdare all dangers.
Consider this now, good my lord, and do
Accordingly; for if they now rely
On their God's help, 'twere wise to pass them by.

With Him they are invincible, without Him
Their strength is nothing." Then, with wild outcry,
Enraged with Achior, all the men about him
Shouted that he was false and ought to die,
And eagerly bade Holofernes doubt him
And his vain words. From few should many fly?
Against so great an army could it be
That Israel's God could Israel save? Not he!



Then Holofernes said ; “ What hast thou spoken,
Hireling of Ammon ? Tell me, who is God
But Nabuchodnosor ? Lo ! The token—

His power shall crush them, and his heavy rod
Destroy them. Shall his royal word be broken ?

Not so—their corpses shall make fat the clod,
Their mountain shall be drunken with their blood ;
Is not the king’s wrath a devouring flood ?

It shall devour alike both them and thee.

But if their God will now indeed befriend them,
Hold up thy countenance—for thou shalt be

Safe with them ; should he haply not defend them,
Then shall the swords of them that follow me

Pierce thee, too, in the day that I shall end them.”
His servants, as he bade them, to the mountains
Led Achior, even to Bethulia’s fountains.

And at the hill’s foot, where the fountains flowed,
They bound and left him ; but the Watchers came,
And led him to their mountainous abode,


And took him to their Elders. They his name
Inquired, and why he was so bound. He shewed

The matter to them, and they thought it shame
That the flagitious heathen should defy
With vile comparisons their Lord on high.

Then all the people fell down in prostration,
And prayed; "Lord God of heaven, behold their pride;
Pity the low condition of our nation,
And look in mercy on thy sanctified."
And when they thus had made their supplication,
They cheered and lauded Achior; by his side
Ozias placed him, and he made a feast—
That softens trouble, for a time at least.

But Holofernes drew out in the plain
His mighty army, cavalry and foot;
Near twenty myriads were his martial train,
With thousands of camp-followers to boot.
And they like locusts, all the country's bane,
Marched from Esdraelon to the pleasant root
Of hills, which like a collar stood around
The lofty peak with fair Bethulia crowned.

The Assyrian Captain, like an eager lover—
In haste and cruelty means my comparison—
Like hawk for heron or a silly plover,
Burns, maddens for his quarry; nor he tarries on
His lines, but reconnoitres, under cover
Of all his horse, their heights, and sets a garrison
At every fountain in the grassy glades,
O'erlooked by crags and umbered with their shades.



Still the Bethulians had a single fountain,
On which they much relied in all their trouble,
That trickled from the shin of their tall mountain,
And crept along its foot with many a bubble
Of soft refreshing sweetness ; on this counting,
They feared not to be dried up like the stubble
Left by the reaper—perched upon their rock
With food and water they a siege might mock.


The sons of Moab and of Esau, whom,
Detested by them, Israel's sons detested,
Surprised this fountain, bringing thickest gloom
O'er the besieged ; nor Holofernes rested
Till he insnared them in the trap of doom
(For so he thought he snared them), and invested
The circuit of their towers ; thus spiders get
Poor flies, that fall into their close-spun net.

The booby lives and fattens, who no grist earns
For his vile maw ; dull princes have their diet ;
While bards and heroes starve, who had not missed urns
And laurels, had there been a bloody riot
To sing or to enact. Bethulia's cisterns
Were dry, and how can thirsty souls be quiet ?
'Twas very hard that patriots, wanting water,
Should have to offer their bold throats to slaughter.

Fainted their women and young men from thirst—
The pining mother could not still the cry
Of the dear babe, which late she fondly nursed,—
Alack! Her bosom's milky springs were dry—
The pious prayed—the hopeful said the worst
Was nearly passed, and that relief was nigh,—
The bravest lost their courage, and the old
Only remained still confident and bold.

But round their chief, Ozias, thronged the crowd,
And round their Elders; and reviled them all,
And called on them by name, and cried aloud;
“God judge 'twixt us and you! Now send and call
And make our peace with Assur—we are bowed
Down in the dust from thirst, and needs must fall
Into their hands. We hope not for release,
Escape, nor succour,—send and make us peace.

“We have no helper; only death is nigh;
And ye on us have this destruction brought;
We will not see our wives and children die,
And miserably perish here from drought.
'Tis better to become their spoil than lie
Helpless and perishing.” Their bitter thought
They thus expressed; and then with tears and cries
They prayed, “Oh God! Pity our agonies!”



To them Ozias ; “Sirs ! Be not dismayed,
Endure it yet five days ; for it may be
That in that space our God may send us aid ;
If no help come, then will I do as ye
Demand.” Nor they his counsel disobeyed,
But to the walls and towers went readily.
The women and the children, sad and slow,
Returned unto their homes—their thirst and woe.


Now what Ozias said was told a woman,
A widow woman in Bethulia dwelling ;
At the good deeds of feminine let no man,
With vain conceit and fastuous humour swelling,
Sneer idly ; in that sex 'tis not uncommon
To find a lovely specimen, excelling
In virtue as in beauty—though in *his*
True worth is very rarely found, I wis.

A widow three years and a quarter she ;
One of those true ones mentioned by the Apostle ;
Such women, even reprobates agree,
By their sweet looks and good example cost hell
The loss of sundry subjects—as for me,
Whene'er I go where knaves or wittols jostle
For place or mastery, I wish them wives
Of Ephesus—to mend or end their lives.

Our widow's husband from a sun-stroke died
In barley harvest, says the Chronicle,
While seeing how his men the full sheaves tied ;
And on her house-top she was pleased to dwell
Thereafter in a tent—at least she hied
Thither for prayer or sleep, as to his cell
A hermit would, when hermits were—but now
Wild beasts your only hermits are, I trow.

Judith was young, and beautiful, and good,
And rich—and, hearing what Ozias said,
And how his contract with the people stood,
She sent for him, and those who with him led
The counsels of the city. Widowhood,
That enters not another marriage-bed,
Chaste, rich, and pious, may such license take
With reverend Age. They came, and thus she spake ;

“Ye rulers of Bethulia ! Who are ye
That tempted God this day ? Ye cannot find
The secret thoughts that in a man's heart be ;
Can ye discover God and know his mind,
Or comprehend his purpose ? List to me—
Why should ye to five days his mercy bind ?
Can he not, when and how he will, arise
In our defence, and quench our enemies ?



“ He wavers not like man, and his decrees
Go forth immutable. There is not now
A worshipper of stone or stocks of trees
Among us ; nor doth this our people bow
To graven images ; and if he please
He will deliver us, and anyhow
Will not forsake us, though to try he send us
Trouble and woe ; he doth chastise to mend us.”

To her Ozias ; “ Goodly from the first
Hast thou been ever, and in this art wise.
The people bear impatiently their thirst ;
The oath we made them on our conscience lies ;
Therefore, pray God for us that rain may burst,
To fill our cisterns from the long-shut skies,
And him to be our Saviour and Defender
Within five days—or else we must surrender.”

“ Hear me,” said Judith, “ I will do a thing
Whose memory shall live in our dear land,
Of which our women shall hereafter sing ;
Ye, rulers, in the gate this night shall stand,
While with my handmaid I go forth to bring
Back safety with me ; by my feeble hand
The Lord will, in the time, deliver those,
Whom ye would yield, not *to* but *from* the foes.

“ But ask me not, for I will not declare
My purpose till 'tis done.” With blessing meet
The rulers left the widow wise and fair.
Holy was Judith's solitude, and sweet
Her self-communion—for her thought was prayer.
And holy thought is incense best, I weet ;
Derived from heaven, for heaven it ever yearns,
And thither, cradled, on a sigh, returns.

She prayed unto the God of the forlorn—
The Saviour of the hopeless ; and besought
That swiftest execution should be born
Out of the purpose gendered by the thought
He had inspired—to quench the Assyrian's scorn,
And shew the nations who for Israel wrought
Salvation—e'en the God of power and might,
Who kept watch over them by day and night.

She then put off the weeds of widowhood,
Bathed, and with precious ointment glistening shone ;
No brighter beauty lover ever wooed
Than Judith seemed, when she again put on
Her robes of gladness, which in her sad mood
She would not wear—as worn in times by-gone,
When her Manasses lived ; her pomp of hair
She combed, and braided, and adorned with care.

A splendid turban, pied with many a streak
Of richest colours, on her head she set ;
And round her neck's marmorean whiteness, sleek
As cygnet's down, she wore a carcanet
Of precious stones ; sparkled her sunny cheek
In her rich frontlet's sheen ; the glowing jet
Of her arched eyebrows and the raven fringe
Of her sweet eyelids had a golden tinge.

Rings in her ears, with drops like rose-buds, gleamed ;
And bracelets glittered on her wrists and arms ;
And sparkles from her brilliant girdle beamed
With soft light under *that* which draws, wins, warms
The fancy most—a bosom that beseemed
Her exquisite proportions, and the charms
Of Syria's brightest beauty ; to complete
Her dress, she put rich sandals on her feet.

A bottle of good wine and cruse of oil
Her maid took in a bag, besides provision
Of fine bread and of figs ; some make a coil
About our nature's urgent requisition
For food and drink ; but with or without toil
Our grosser nature faints from inanition,
And the soul droops as from a venomous sting—
Like a chained eagle with a broken wing.

Their watch, attending her, the rulers kept
E'en at the city gate, and, having blessed her,
They bade the warders let her pass. She stepped
Boldly into the night ; no fear distressed her ;
No phantom of misgiving o'er her crept ;
No dread of what the world would say possessed her :
She meant to snare the heathen with her beauty ;
And to do that she knew to be her duty.

Oh, waly ! Love is bonny for a while—
Oh ! Love is exquisite, when it is new ;
But (as the minstrel sang in tender style)
When auld 'tis cauld, and wears away like dew.
The heart must miss the comfort of a smile
That was its light—a bloom of rosy hue ;
But the soul's inner light of love divine
Fades not into a dream of auld lang syne.

This light was in her soul as on she went,
Cheered by the thoughts of that indwelling Love ;
In the gaunt rock's bleak, black, and blasted rent,
In peace dwells, loves, and broods the tender dove ;
And she within the bold Assyrian's tent
Would be as safe—Love watched her from above.
With this assurance (they love least who doubt most)
She walked unto the first Assyrian outpost.

Seen by the glare of fire-brands in the night,
That Vision scared the watch ; in awe they bowed
As to a visitant for earth too bright ;
But when their fear a longer gaze allowed,
They looked upon her form with keen delight,
And questioned her. She then her wish avowed,
To see the mighty Captain of the host
On matters which concerned his office most.

A hundred chosen men, their guards and guides,
Conducted the two women to the tent
Where Holofernes lay. How Rumour rides
Post-haste with any new or strange event !
Nor spares the spur, but ever pricks the sides
Of Wonder, her fleet steed. As Judith went
Through the vast camp, where'er she passed a throng
Was there to see the Jewess pass along.

Nor frightened was she by the heavy tramp
Of rushing feet, nor by the torches flaring,
In every lane and alley of the camp,
That shewed the soldiery with keen eyes glaring
On her bright loveliness. Lo ! Many a lamp
Shone in an open space, where none were staring
And all was hushed, before a rich pavilion
Festooned with purple curtains and vermillion.

And there they stopped—a whisper at the door—

A pause—and then a page came forth and told
The women to go in. He went before,

They followed, and were shut within the fold
Of those rich hangings—and their quest was o'er.

Under a canopy of cloth of gold,
With emeralds and precious stones inwrought,
Lay stretched at ease the man that Judith sought.

Then on her face she fell before the Chief,

And did him homage ; with her beauty ta'en,
He raised and questioned her ; “ What is thy grief,
And wherefore art thou come ? None trust in vain
In Nabuchodonosor. Let belief

Assure thy hope that thou shalt safety gain
Under his banner. All who serve him own
A safeguard in the shadow of his throne.

“ The people of the hills set light by me,

Or I would not have lifted up my spear
Against them ; tell me, what is it drew thee
From them to us, to seek for refuge here ? ”

Then Judith said ; “ My lord, accept my plea,

And to thy handmaid let thy grace appear,
That I may freely in thy presence speak
Why I from them with thee a refuge seek.

“ As Nabuchodonosor lives, the might
And king of earth, if thou wilt only heed
Thy handmaid's words which I am come this night
To speak, thy war and counsel shall succeed ;
For God, our God, in whose unwavering sight,
As Achior truly told my lord indeed,
Our people lives, will give them as a prey
Into thy hands, to hunt, and snare, and slay.

“ Thy mastery in war, thy policies,
Wise in the council ! Daring in the field !
Who has not heard of ? Earth and all that is
On earth shall to the despot homage yield.
All power and all dominion shall be his
By thee, his feodary—his arm to wield
The sword of justice, and his soul of state,
Organ of mercy, instrument of fate !

“ My people sin against the God of heaven,
And break his laws ; and they without his power
To keep them up are broken, crushed, and riven—
Thy sword shall mow them, and thy wrath devour !
Therefore I fled ; and furthermore 'tis given
To me to know when it shall come, the hour
Of their destruction ; now 'tis very near ;
To tell thee when it cometh I am here.

“ Into the valley must I nightly go—

My God will tell me there when I shall call
To thee—‘ The hour is come ! Behold the foe !’

As sheep without a shepherd shall they fall,
Smitten before thee ; I, thy guide, will shew

Thee through Judea to the capital,
The great Jerusalem ! There is thy throne !
And what I say has been to me foreshewn.”

She spake, and he believed, and thus replied ;

“ Thy features with the light of beauty shine,
Thy sweet breath utters wisdom. Be my guide,
As thou hast said ; thy God shall then be mine ;
And in the king’s own house shalt thou reside ;
No name of womankind shall equal thine.”

That night he dreamt the Jewess stood before him,
And crowned, and poured the oil of gladness o’er him.

She lodged securely in a guarded tent,

But would not taste the Assyrian’s meat and wine ;
And pleased him, telling him that ere was spent

The food she brought of her own corn and vine,
His time would come ; and every night she went
Into the valley to receive the sign,

As she told him ; but in the fountain there
She bathed, and then returned with conscience clear.

For heathen camp to her was place unclean ;
And everywhere, but in hot countries most,
Strict cleanliness is godliness I ween.
She bathed, and prayed, then to the godless host
Fearless returned. Few Captains have there been
Who could of chastity and honour boast ;
And Holofernes thought 'twould be a shame
Not to make merry with the Hebrew dame.

And on the fourth day, wishing to assay her,
He bade his steward prepare a feast, and find
The Hebrew woman, and from him to pray her
To grace the banquet. It was in his mind,
From the first day he saw her, to betray her.
Judith consented, and as if to bind
The Assyrian faster, and enchant his eye,
She dressed herself in all her bravery.

Love holds his empire with deceitful wiles,
Laughs at the crafty, and enchains the free ;
He makes the lovely lovelier ; and his smiles,
Frowns, tears, entreaties, whims resistless be ;
His universal power tames or beguiles
The countless tribes of air, and earth, and sea ;
Those whom he touches he makes glad, or saddens,
And all his subjects for a time he maddens.

Thrice hapless they who only feel and know
The brutal love that sways the bestial herd !
Soldiers will, sometimes, spare a fallen foe,
But not to hit one's game were quite absurd.
At least our hero viewed the matter so,
And to his soul his meanest sense preferred.
He chuckled in his heart, and deemed his own
The queen-like beauty, and the promised throne.

Proud as his dainty mother when she bore him—
For women are proud of the punishment
Entailed on them by Eve—a vallance o'er him
With which his master might have been content ;
A splendid feast and richest wines before him,
And his rapt eyes on rarest beauty bent !
The wine-cup made him fonder than before—
The more he gazed on her he drank the more.

Fair Judith blenched not at the Captain's look,
Nor trembled as his tide of mirth grew higher ;
Nor, modest as she was, disdained to brook
His tongue's quick fervour, and his glance of fire ;
But only of the food and wine partook
Which her maid brought. But ever his desire
Grew as he drank, fed by his wanton gaze—
He never was so drunk in all his days.

The night was come; the servants had their clue,
The wrecks and remnants of the feast removed,
And then discreetly from the tent withdrew.

But the great Captain saw not, nor improved
His opportunity. He could not woo

Nor e'en admire the beauty which he loved.
Like the gorged boa lay the man of might—
The spirit of the grape had tamed him quite.

Like a mere log he lay upon his bed,
And Judith in his tent with him alone!
The servants left her with their master dread,
And no reluctance on her part was shewn.
They thought him happy, and perchance one said,
He wished the Captain's fortune was his own.
She bade her handmaid wait without the door,
As she would go to prayer as heretofore.

No light o' love was she to trim his bower—
But on that body still she fixed her eyes;
And in her heart she prayed; "O God of power!
Look on me, steel me to mine enterprise;
Deliver Israel now; this is the hour—
Behold! He speechless, senseless, helpless lies!"
Then to the pillar of his bed she stepped,
And took the falchion down which there he kept.

She took hold of his hair, and softly said ;
 “ Now, now, Lord God of Israel, strengthen me.”
Twice on his neck she smote, and took his head
 Away from him ; nor paused in terror she,
But tumbled down the body from the bed,
 And from the pillars tore the canopy.
So perish every tyrant ! Let the night
Wither his strength—the grave devour his might !

Tremble, ye tyrants ! Tremble on the throne,
 Ye beasts of rapine, and ye men of blood !
Suspect your guards, and tremble when alone—
 Ha ! See ye not the yawning fiery flood
That gapes for you ? Tremble, ye fools ! and groan,
 Ye Gods of clay ! Evil, your only good,
Shall be your portion, and the Dragon’s den
Your home, ye trampers on your fellow-men !

Nor Judith feared to look upon the dead,
 But quietly remained until she thought
It was her time to go ; then without dread
 She called her handmaid, told what she had wrought,
And bringing forth the grim and ghastly head,
 She bade her put it in the bag she brought.
And then walked forth with calm and stately air,
As going to her place of nightly prayer.

Nor sank her heart, nor was her visage bleached
With terror, while with wonted pace she went
Through the broad camp; no sentinel impeached
Her by the way,—for orders had been sent
To let her pass; the twain the valley reached,
Thence onward to their own Bethulia bent
Their eager steps, and when they reached the gates,
She cried aloud; “Open! ’Tis Judith waits.”

They heard and knew her voice, and soon made slide
The bars and bolts—her accents cheered them all;
A fire some kindled; others quickly hied
To tell her coming, and their Elders call.
When they were come, before them all she cried,—
“Behold how Assur by my hand doth fall!
Praise God, praise God, praise only God, I say,
Who hath this night removed our foes away.”

Then took the head, and shewed it them, and smiled,
And said; “The head of Holofernes see!
Him by my beauty truly I beguiled,
But in return he brought no shame on me;
For as I went I come back—undefiled.”
Ozias said; “Our God hath blessed thee;
Thy blessing be for evermore!” And then
The people loudly cried, “Amen! Amen!”

But none with greater joy the news received,

And saw the head, than Achior; by the death
Of Holofernes was his life reprieved;

He saw and swooned, but with recovered breath
To her did homage, and in God believed.

Mercy the hard heart oft o'ermastereth—
And Achior, grateful for his life preserved,
Turned Jew—nor from the true faith ever swerved.

By Judith's counsel, when the morning rose,

They hanged the Assyrian's head upon the wall;
And they, as if intent against their foes,

Marched out in arms and battle-order all.
The Assyrian sentries, looking out for blows,

Ran to their officers, who sent to call
The chief of their division, who was most
Anxious to wake the captain of the host.

His no-sex favourite was much annoyed

At thought of calling him from Judith's arms;
But then the slaves would sooner be destroyed;

To leave was not to lose her bloom of charms.
His master would be likewise overjoyed—

Some men think musical rude war's alarms.
True to his function, still he paused—the staff
Smiled, whispered, winked—they were afraid to laugh.

At last with much unwillingness he knocked,
And, when none answered, entered by the door.
What hideous spectacle his eye-sight mocked !
Is that a headless body on the floor ?
The trunk of Holofernes ? Startled, shocked,
He rent his garments, and with loud uproar
He cried : " My lord is slain ! Fallen from his bed ;
Lo ! Holofernes lies without a head ! "

Swift through the camp the dreadful tidings ran ;
Amazed, confounded, lost in awe and wonder,
Prince, leader, tribune, soldier, serving-man,
Raised, as though fell among them bolts of thunder,
The cry of panic—" Save himself who can ! "
Rather than fight they chose to perish under
The blows of their pursuers. " Ha ! They fly ! "
The Hebrews cried ; " destroy them utterly ! "

They chased ! They slew them ! Of the mighty band
But few escaped ; Ha ! Not with perfumed oil
They glistened ; nor they revelled in the land
With Syrian paramours ! His martial toil
Ended abruptly, by a woman's hand
The slayer slain, the spoiler made a spoil,
When the chief fell, where was the spear, the car
Of Nabuchodonosor, god of war ?

Then from Jerusalem the high priest came,
And with him all the ancients, to behold
The Assyrian camp and that exalted dame
By God, the Giver of all good, made bold,
And beautiful, and wise, with power to tame
The beast that came to ramp amid their fold;
And they all blessed her as the exaltation
Of Israel—joy and glory of their nation.

The women of her people thronged around her
To see and bless her; called her daughter best
Of Israel; with a wreath of olive crowned her,
And eke her handmaid; and their joy expressed
By song and dance; the men, too, did surround her,
Adorned with garlands, and in armour dressed.
Then Judith and her maid with dance and song
Devoutly led the holy pomp along.

CAIN.

(A MONOLOGUE.)




CAIN.

(A MONOLOGUE.)

Is it blood—blood that stains my cruel hand ?
Whose blood is it ? My brother's ! Abel's blood ?
Who slew, in Abel, brother—fellow-man,
The son of his own parents, and the loved
Of the great Father ?—Who but cursed Cain ?
Earth, air, heaven, and the silent stars speak out,
And my own heart cries, “ Cain ! The murderer Cain ! ”
No little Abel yet had called him father,
No gentle spouse, like our sweet mother, yet
Had dressed his bower. He died in innocence.
Died ! Death ! And what is death ? Must I die too ?
Where, where is Abel ? Is his voice, his heart,
His smile, dead ? Is his gentle spirit dead ?
And is this death ? Distasteful, hideous death !

But yesterday I was most wretched, sunk
In the wild surge of a most mad despair ;
But, ah ! That wretchedness of yesterday
Was rapturous bliss compared to this day's woe ;
That wild despair was peace and holy calm
To the weight unbearable of this to-day.
The sun looks bloody on my lonely path—
The gurgling streamlet bubbles up in blood—
Dark gouts of gore seem dropping from the trees—
The air becomes a voice, and whispering asks,
“ Where is thy brother, Cain ? Cain, where is Abel ? ”
Night comes, but brings not sleep as heretofore ;
In dreams and visions of the night I see
The murdered Abel, and he smiles—still smiles ;
Would that he frowned ! That smiling look of his
Makes my heart cold. I rush into the air,
And the vexed stars look angry, and the moon
Veils her sad face. Would that I ne'er had been !
Would that I ne'er had slain him ! “ Blood for blood ! ”
From mother Earth a voice says, “ Blood for blood ! ”
The murdered Abel, whom I see in sleep,
He only frowns not, says not, “ Blood for blood ! ”

But I must go—though blood be on my path.
No more the gentle Eve may call me son ;
No more the venerable Adam hail,



With morning salutation and at eve,
His first-born. . . Never more shall He, who walked
Among us, speak to me—except in thunder.
While she—the single boon—my tender spouse,
Smiles on me, though her eyes are full of tears ;
And I must be a father, and my sons
Shall learn to curse and execrate their sire.
Abel, my brother ! How I hated thee !
And yet when I did hate thee most, I loved
Thee better than I loved my hated self.
Farewell, ye memories of infant peace—
Farewell, ye scenes of boyhood ! And farewell,
My father's presence and my mother's love !
Farewell, thou cursed scene !—The sacrifice
I scorned, and the brother whom I slew.
Farewell, thou dear religion of my home—
The spot where Adam blessed me, in his arms
Receiving Eve's first infant ! Fatal boon !
Where I did grow in rude and vigorous health,
While yet the germ of nobleness was in me,
That grew not to the flower, but fell i' the bud,
Cankered by envy and by hellish spite.
Welcome, despair ! And after weary life
Is over, welcome, dreaded, longed-for death !
Blood ever is before me, and no song
Of morning or of evening bird—no air

Of fragrance, and no touch of human love—
Of husband or of father—that shall be—
Can bring me hope. The fountain of my life
Is choked with blood,—my brother's, Abel's blood !
I have no place of refuge where to flee ;
The unseen Eye is on the murderer's path ;
A voice is ever ringing in my ears—
“ Where is thy brother, Cain ? ”—and when I arm
My hand against myself, the Ever-seeing
With his resistless hand inhibits me.
I have no hope but what I most do fear,
And what I hope yet fear I cannot have—
The chilling death I brought into the world.
Unhappy, wretched, miserable Cain !
I fear the dead, the living, and unseen ;
I shrink from her that loves me ; fear to see
The life that's in her, that shall smile on me,
And call me father,—Abel had no child !
I fear the darkness and the light of day—
The face of Nature and accusing Earth—
The past that never, never can return—
The present, full of horrors and of woes—
And that dim future which its shadow throws
Of deeper darkness on my present dark.
My brother Abel, I am punished !

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.



—

ARGUMENT.

JEPHTHA, chosen judge, is absent from his home to do battle against the children of Ammon. The Spirit of the Lord comes upon him, and he is thus marked out as the appointed instrument for the deliverance of his people. He makes a vow to offer as burnt-offering that living thing which shall first meet him out of the doors of his house, when he returns in peace from the Ammonites. The day of battle comes on; the Elders of Gilead and the chorus of Gileadite girls, friends and companions of his daughter, are assembled at Mizpeh. They have on all hands an expectation that a great battle will be fought, and a great deliverance effected on that day. The chorus and Miriam sing praises and a hymn to the Giver of all good. Miriam, by the suggestions of her friends, and from some mysterious influence on her own mind, is induced to expect that her espousals are drawing near. The Elders, nothing doubting their deliverance, have some fears that Jephtha may be devoted. The first messenger reports the commencement of the battle, with the particulars preceding it. Adad gives a brief account of Jephtha's history. Miriam comes forth, under the shadowing of some preternatural mystery. The chorus think her vision apocalyptic, and

presage her marriage and high destiny. The second messenger reports the victory, and the circumstances attending it. The chorus sing the song of Moses. Jephtha is descried approaching. His daughter is the first living thing that meets him from his house, and thus becomes "his vow." She is not at all disheartened, but professes her willingness to be burnt-offering for him and her people. The nurse and chorus, remaining on the place, utter mingled lamentations and thanksgivings. The chorus close the action with a song in honour of the victor-victim.

The Persons.

JEPHTHA, *Judge of Israel.*

ADAD, *an Elder of Gilead.*

SECOND ELDER.

JARED.

ZEBUL.

MIRIAM, *the Daughter of JEPHTHA.*

NURSE.

CHORUS OF GILEADITE GIRLS.

Scene—before JEPHTHA'S House at Mizpeh.

Time—the day of the Victory over the Ammonites.



JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

MIRIAM, NURSE, CHORUS.

MIRIAM.

THE lingering night ! How slowly did it pass !
And now the glorious day ! How beautiful !
The morn is merry, and the valleys laugh ;
Joy stands a-tiptoe on the dew-dropt trees ;
The lily and the rose, sweet rivals, shew
Their blooming braveries ; the cedar-top
Rustling trills with a living harmony.
See ! how the innocent kids go frisking by,
And with what joy sedate and measured pace
That woolly counsellor leads forth his people.
And yonder goes my hart—(remember, Nurse !
How I did find him, when he was so high,
A tiny pining fawn, and how we thought

Some lion had despoiled him of his dam,
And how I fed him and did garland him
Till he grew tall and proud, and fled away,
Unkind one! why I never yet could guess)—
See! how he bounds and clears the water-brook!
My own! My beautiful! My gallant hart!
Yonder into the thick of sheltering green
He glancing glides, and like a dream is gone!
The very grass enjoys the morwening,
And each particular blade is diamonded
With day-spring dew. The blue arch over us
Looks inexpressible love; and that bright orb
Seems a benevolence instinct with life—
How like a king he looks upon the world!
I feel a voice within me, and must needs
(Most exquisite impulse!) interpret it:—
Break into joy, ye daughters of the land!
For, lo! the winter it is past, and gone
The weltering rain; the flowers are on the earth;
The happy birds enjoy their singing-time,
And in our land the turtle's voice is heard;
Already from the vine-leaf peeps the grape,
And her green figs the fig-tree putteth forth.
Break into joy, ye virgins! and proclaim
The Giver of all good—the vital Spring
Of his creation, who upon this day

Weighs in his scales the Ammonites and us ;
And will this day defeat the Ammonite,
(The Voice assures me), and to Jephtha give
The victory : to His name be the praise !

CHORUS.


Hail, Father ! Father of the day !
On bended knees we praise and pray ;
We pray and praise—but know not how ;
Teach us, O teach us, Thou !
Hear us, O hear, Ancient of Days !
Our praise is prayer—our prayer is praise.
Upon our brethren bend from high
The favour of a father's eye ;
Upon our haughty foemen rain
Dismay, discomfiture, disdain.
Break into joy ! He hears our vow,—
Our God accepts us now.

Unfathomable are the ways
Of Him who watches from above ;
He is beyond the creature's gaze,
Though present to his love.
His counsels lurk in thickest night,
But thickest dark to Him is light.

The future leaves the seer behind ;
The gazer on the stars is blind ;
The magian's black enchantment flies ;
The conqueror slays his slain, and dies ;
But with His thoughts His actions run—
God wills, and it is done.

In shades impenetrable hid,
In darkness more than darkness dim,
The deep paths of His mind forbid
The starry cherubim.
Unseen, approachless, and alone,
He sits upon his light-hid throne,
And sees fond man presume on fate,
With summer-swelling hopes elate ;
He marks him in his proudest hour,
Self-worshipt in his heart's high tower,
Just clutching at a rainbow crown,—
God sees and dashes down——

Down falls, like some untimely birth,
The ephemeral ; His kneaded clod
Resolved to water and to earth,—
His soul before his God.
But unimpeded in His path,
And passionless in love or wrath,



The Master-mind with steadfast pace
Moves tranquil on ; and from His place,
From light's remotest orb as far
As from the earth the farthest star,
At once inspects each glistening ball,
And marks a sparrow fall.

He is our God : to Him we raise
Our chant of love, our hymn of praise ;
To Him our white-hand gifts we bring ;
The independent King ;
The Life ! The generating Sire ;
The One ! The pure spiritual Fire ;
Who breathed, and every sphered Light
Sprung from the bosom of the Night ;
Who now beholds our virgin-band,
Nor scorns the offering of our hand ;
But makes His ancient race His care,
And grants His people's prayer.

MIRIAM.

Hail, Father ! Mine the simple offering
Of prayer and praise, which ever as the Morn
Dances upon our hill-tops, or meek Eve
Lets fall her dewy curtain on our groves,
To Thee I bring, twining the season's flowers,
Or dancing to the harp and sweeter sound

Of the glad voice of this dear sisterhood,—
Dear always, dearest then from concord true
In this high privilege of naming Thee.
Be Thou our guardian ; keep Thy handmaids free
From spots and stains o' the world men say is evil—
Indeed, we know must be so ; else not now
Would that uncivil Ammon vex our hearts,
By doing despite to Thy holy Name.
Hang over us the banner of Thy love,
And keep our bee-loved valleys and our tents,
Our rivers and our brooks, sweet-smelling vineyards,
Green pastures and the innocents that graze them ;
And most the spots peculiar to Thy love,
Valley, or hill, or grove—if such there be,
For all the earth is Thine, and Thou must love it—
The honoured places where for ever dwells,
Taught by Thy presence, sanctimonious Fear ;
Wherever Thou with prophet, saint, or bard,
Hast talked, or with the lowly heart communed,—
Grace freely given to the pure of heart and meek,
But to all else denied ;—dear Father ! Keep
All that we cherish from the insulting foe ;
Bring safely back our brethren and the judge ;
Assert Thy reign, nor ever let lewd War
With his abominable face affright
Our peaceful homes ; hear, Sov'ran Mercy ! Now,

As Thou hast heretofore, to human sense
Replying, or in vision or by voice ;
For I have heard (oftener while yet a child
Than of late years), though I did never see
The soft, low, solemn Voice that spake to me.

NURSE.

Well pleased am I, dear child, that cheerful thou
Lookest upon the morning, to the Highest
Thy wonted duty paying ; blest the sire,
Whose pious children call down blessings on him :
Happy the mother was, the father is,
Who calls thee child ; meek was thy infancy,
Thy childhood lovely, and thy budding youth
Is beautiful ; frown never on thy brow,
Nor curling anger on thy red-ripe lip.
Happy thy coming and thy going forth ;
Happy upon thy lids the flower-soft touch
Of silvery slumber falls ; happy the light
Peeps through the curtained fringes of thine eyes,
Relieving sleep, sweet spirit of the night !
Well do I think thou deemest of the day,
And even now that to the battle goes,
With like presage and augury of good,
The leader and the troop of Gilead—
So be it !

MIRIAM.

Nurse and mother, both in one,
Since she that bore me died before I knew her ;
Praise is not good for youth, our elders say,
And evermore the heart is prone to folly,
And the quick ear, more than the rolling eye,
Is avenue, whereby the Tempter steals
On woman's weakness ; love, but praise me not.
That I am meek, lowly, and dutiful,
And am, like many others, reverent,
Calls for our thanks to Him, who breathes on us
All that we have of good, and keeps from us
Those foul suggestions which provoke to sin.

NURSE.

But of the best and fairest of the land,
Thou fairest——

MIRIAM.

Nay, I'll kiss thee into silence,
And will not cease till thou dost promise me
To tell some sweet and antique history
Of fair Rebecca, or the tender-eyed
Daughter of Laban, or of Joseph sold
Into captivity ; how Hagar wept,
And could not look upon her little one,

To see him die, when suddenly a spring
Of water gurgled up, and brought her hope,
And in that hope life for her outcast boy,
For 'twas the Lord who spake and pitied her ;
How Pharaoh and his army in the sea
Sunk, and the parted walls of waves fell down,
Through which the host of Israël just passed ;
Or of my mother, since I never tire
To hear of her, nor thou to talk of her.

NURSE.

How like her mother grows my darling child !
She was but few months older when she left
Her father's homestead for thy father's arms.

MIRIAM.

May I be like my mother in my life !
Since all who knew her loved her ; whom to name
Yet makes my father tremble ; whom all praise,
And now thou weepest as we talk of her.
I only recollect her in my dreams ;
Then oft I see a pale face over me,
And folded arms that open to embrace me,
And sometimes feel a kiss upon my lips,
A mother's kiss—but ever as the day
Breathes light around my bed, the vision flies,

And so I lose my mother, and I weep
Tears not unpleasant ; then I love thee more,
Who did receive me from her dying arms,
Vowing the vow, which thou so well hast kept,
Of faith undying, wakeful care, and love.

NURSE.

Yes! She was good, and from her resting-place
Breathe the sweet odours of an honoured name :
She died yet young ; and in her dying hour
She fondly hoped that the unconscious child,
Whose cheek, close to her dying cheek, was wet,
And who, with grief refusing to be stilled,
Sobbed, though she knew not why,—might be the mould
From whence should spring the great Deliverer,
The promised, and the looked-for ; the Desire
Of women, Prophet, King, and Lawgiver ;
The Banner of our nation, and the Sword ;
The Avenger on the Gentile ; Builder-up
Of fanes and temples to the Great Unseen ;
The Bruiser of the Evil One ; proclaimed
Of bard and prophet ; and of whom to be
The mother hopes each girl of Israël,
And in the high mood of her passionate
Fond faith hopes on—till she believes in her
The Consummation shall be, and for her

The nuptial hour teems with the hope fulfilled.
So may it be! Thou, thou the honoured one!
And soon as Jephtha comes, returning back,
As we do hope and think, with victory,
For thee the father will provide a spouse,
In hope to take the warrior-boy—thy child,
And his derived through thee, into his arms,
And read the lines of greatness on his brow,
And kiss him with a reverential love.

MIRIAM.

To Heaven and to my father I commit
That hopeful care. The Highest looks upon
The daughters who do love Him, and I leave
My future to His loving providence;
I am His handmaid—and His will be done!

NURSE.

Yet, darling! or I much misdeem, thy heart
Has thought of marriage-song and bridal pomp;
Flowers and soft words; harp, lute, and dulcimer;
Tears of the sisterhood, whose virgin life
Has grown in sweet companionship with thine,
From laughing eyes dropping on glowing cheeks,—
The merry sadness, and the sudden gush
Of fond affection, when the loved one goes

To happiness, but goes to it from them ;
Thy sire half-sad half-cheerful ; and thy nurse—
The dear old nurse, with whom thou aye hast slept,
In loving sleep still growing to her side,—
How the old fool will weep, and dash aside
Her sullen tears, and kindle into smiles,
Eloquent blessings, wishes, prayers, and vows !
Then of that Celebration, which shall make
The fairest Miriam a mother-nurse——

MIRIAM.

Have done, dear Nurse ! The prophet of our tribe,
The good interpreter, but yesternight
Bade me in secret try my inmost heart,
And in sequestered meditation muse,
And bend myself before the great Unseen,
For that the hour of Preparation comes.
I thought he spake of what thou talkest now ;
Nor unprepared for womanly offices,
When love makes duty pleasure, nor untaught
In that high guerdon of a mother's faith,
Which makes the daughters of our people glad
When comes the nuptial hour, I willing heard,
And went into myself ; at first I thought
Of our old histories, how Adam lay
Unconscious and in preternatural sleep,

In that blest garden, on a grassy bed
Purpled with sweetest flowers, while murmuring by
Euphrates rolled his happy-flowing stream,
And overhead, in the far-stretching tree
That shaded him, the bird of Paradise
Made music, speaking to his inward sense,
To outward influence though shut not closed ;
And that bright bird sang evermore of love,
And new delights of home and fellowship
Immortal with Immortal, and a race
Of precious promise and perpetual youth,
Fair as the Shining Ones he waking saw.
And how the wondering sleeper then perceived
One like himself growing from out his side ;
Who, as by some constraint of natural love,
As loath to part, grew to his side again ;
And how when he awoke, sudden, to touch
Of the Unseen, he saw the woman near,
And so Adam and Eve were man and wife.
And then I thought of Abel and of Cain,
And of his too-fair daughters, who seduced
The sons of Seth to leave their father's tents,
And worship idols ; how the Hebrew boy,
Sold to the stranger, by God's counsel saved
The race of promise ; of the weary house
Of bondage ; of our great deliverance thence,

The desert, and the pleasant land we have ;
Rude Ammon in our fields ; my father hence
To battle for us ; and I saw in all
That God was over us, and bent me down ;
And then methought I heard the voice—" Prepare !"
That only did it say ; but yet I feel
That whatsoe'er He wills and does is right ;
And so I am prepared.

NURSE.

I know, my child,
Thou art as virgin in thy maiden thoughts,
And free from sin, as mortal flesh may be ;
Yet apt to love and marriage, not less apt
Because thou art a white-hand Innocence.
The sinful only deem, in fond conceit,
Misdeeming much, that what is natural
To thought and feeling should be kept concealed.
Let them conceal their baseness as they should,
While we give voice to what we know is right.
The ordinance, by which He will work out
His glory and our great deliverance,
Must bring a blessing with it. Wedded love
At once receives and gives true happiness,
It loves to share each sorrow, and impart
Each pleasure. It is drest with summer-smiles ;

It only knows one object, the Beloved.
It is both blest and blessing ; Sympathy,
And chaste Affection, Concord, Faith, and Truth,
Attend it as companions. In its train
Move the domestic graces ; round it play
The bright-winged thoughts that minister to hope ;
And while the freshest airs of heaven creep round,
Young buds of promise bless and sanction it.
Methinks I see thee garlanded and drest ;
Thy robe of spotless white ; thy glossy hair
Twined with a wreath of newly gathered flowers ,
The veil upon thy brow ; in thought I hear
The burst of music and the tremulous voice
Of that blest bridegroom call his Miriam ;
While from the solitude of Preparation,
The light of meditation yet enthroned,
Like Hope's own bow, upon thy even brow,
Thou comest forth to be—a blessed wife.

MIRIAM.

Yet shall I half regret my maiden life,
Free, like the commoners of air and field,
To gather flowers ; or else to sit me down,
And listen to the sound of falling waters ;
Or to pursue, when they in rapid flight
Let loose their garments to the playful wind,

These my sweet sisters ; or in musing lost,
From some cloud-kissing hill to look upon
The tents of Israël ; to think deep thoughts,
And feel high mysteries—but know them not ;
Or, when the virgin daughters of the land
Keep holyday at solemn festival,
To lead the choral song and joyful dance,
Virgin mid virgins ; or with veiled face
To listen to the prophet or the priest,
With assured trust ; and only taught to love
The Care that keeps me, guides, protects, and saves.

NURSE.

Dearer delights await thee, and the cares
Of wedded life bring with them their reward.

MIRIAM.

Happy so far—it suits not me to choose,
But rather to accept what God designs.
Now, Nurse, we'll go and dress my father's hall,
And make our preparations for a feast,
To welcome back my father and our judge.
With timbrels and with dances will I go
To meet the Captain, while upon his plume
Triumph sits laughing ; gladly will he bring
The light of peace to bless his Miriam.

[*Exeunt MIRIAM and NURSE.*]

CHORUS.

When in his garden Adam walked along,
Gazed at the birds, and heard their joyful song ;
Marked all the tribes of living things pass by,
And with their young joys pleased his royal eye ;
Whence, mid those sights and sounds of quiet joy,
Did some dim sense of want his thought annoy ?
What was that blessed hermit's earliest dream,
When first he slept by Pison's murmuring stream ?
He slept and woke, and found his care removed ;
He saw a softer Adam, and he loved.

Happy, thrice happy, those who move
Along the whispering paths of love !
In woody walk or alley green,
Where light and shadow intervene ;
Loitering oft in tangled nook,
Or pausing by the water-brook ;
How happier those, whose bridal hour
Is blest by Jacob's guardian Pow'r !
How happiest she, from whom shall spring
Our long-appointed, promised King !

Soon from the war shall Gilead return,
And mid our tents Sabeian odours burn ;

Soon shall we meet him with our virgin train,
And bring the Captain to his home again ;
Soon shall our sister veil her star-like eyes,
And from her chamber come in bridal guise ;
Joy ! Joy ! The bridegroom hastes to claim his bride ;
She comes ! She comes ! He may not be denied.
With song and dance the marriage-feast we keep ;
But then she leaves us, and her sisters weep.

Joy ! Joy ! For Jephtha's only child,
On whom her dying mother smiled ;
In whom her widowed father lives ;
To whom our God his blessing gives ;
Her hero-sire, in victory's pride,
Will place her by a hero's side.
Our song of joy the valley fills,
And Echo tells it to the hills ;
The sister, whom we love so well,
Shall be a nurse in Israël.

Enter ELDERS.

But, lo ! our Elders come. We hear, good Adad !
Jephtha will fight the Ammonite to-day,
And that their battle is not far from hence ;
Thou knowest Jephtha's purpose,—may we know ?
We do not ask in fear ; for that we feel

Our only Safety has been reconciled,
And Gilead will fight beneath his banner.

ADAD.

In some three hours a swift-foot messenger
Might reach us from the camp. Should Ammon's king
Refuse to leave our fields he claims for his,
Jephtha, methinks, this day will leave it to
The God of battles; rightly are ye taught,—
The favour of His countenance is shewn,
Only withdrawn when headstrong Israël
Provokes His wrath. Long-patient has He been;
And now our people turn again to Him,
With whom is safety, though Philistia rage,
Nile-watered Egypt, and the lands beyond:
They are not now, as when bold Ammon came;
Nor yet as when the mad Abimelech
Distrest our nation, and they cowering shrunk
From that bad man their lawless will advanced
To dignity and proud pre-eminence.


CHORUS.

Young though we be, we've heard when Gideon died,
With years and honours full, our tribes relapsed
To discord, idol-worship, anarchy;
And that Abimelech, his cruel son,]

Slew all his brethren, and raged terribly ;
Undoing all his father wisely did,
Dissolving compacts, holy rites profaning,
Trampling on laws and customs—till at last
He perished by a woman's feeble hand ;
When Tolah, of the tribe of Issachar,
Was chosen leader, and he judged the land
With equity ; and then the Gileadite,
Peace-loving Jair, with wisdom ruled the tribes ;
But at his death, the people once again
Grew wanton from their long prosperity,
Broke down the fences of our civil rights,
Reviled the priests, and called their license law ;
Whereon the Philistine and Ammonite
Came on them, and invaded Gilead,
And seized and keep Manasseh's heritage ;
Whence, in their troubles they chose Jephtha judge :
This is our present quarrel, is it not ?
Which while we speak, perhaps, is being fought.

ADAD.

'Tis even so, fair daughters of the land ;
And it is well ye know that history,
Which tells the woes of our revolted race ;
But now the mighty Dread has been appeased,
And Jephtha is assured of victory,



Or else he had removed your helplessness
From impious Ammon's unsafe neighbourhood.

CHORUS.

We fear not, father Adad ; for we prayed
This morning with sweet Miriam, and sung
A pleasant song, and felt that He was near us,
And heard our singing. Was Abimelech
A mighty warrior, like our present judge,
Stately, and tall, and serious-sad, like him ?

ADAD.

He was a cruel man, who forced himself
To power and station, by the common tricks
Which pass for wisdom with low-thoughted men.
At first was humble-like, and veiled his pride
In cunning cloak of liberal allowance
For popular rights ; Give me the rule, he said,
And see how well it will be with you all ;
And they, like silly sheep, believed the wolf,
And let the ravenous spoiler come within
Their fences, and he slew them. On a time,
There was at Shechem a high festival,
And a prodigious concourse gathered there
From all the tribes ; and thither Jotham came
(Who only saved himself, by timely flight,

Of Gideon's sons), and, sudden to their view,
He stood upon the top of mount Gerizim,
Which looks down upon Shechem; and he called
With a loud voice, and all the people flocked
To hear the words of Jotham; and he spake,
As was his wont, to them in parable;—
“There was a time when all the trees did meet
To regulate their sylvan government,
And to choose one for ruler of them all.
Whereon a great majority preferred
The Fig-tree; but that modest tree declined
The honour, thinking that true glory lay
In bearing fruit; the Olive-tree and Vine
Were next proposed, and each in turn refused,
And for like reason, that pre-eminence.
At length they asked the Bramble; who exclaimed,
If ye in earnest ask me, well content
Am I to govern you, on this condition,
That ye rest quietly beneath my shadow;
For if ye be refractory, a fire
Shall go forth from me to consume you all.—
Thus, men of Israël! ye did indeed
Forget great Gideon, your deliverer,
And let Abimelech cut off his race,
And tyrannise; ye are the silly trees,
Abimelech the bramble with its fire.”

And so it was, fair daughters ! for he raged,
And overthrew their towns, and sprinkled salt
Upon the ruins ; and with fire and sword
Destroyed the people. May the Might One
Put wisdom in our hearts, to seek no king,
But Him alone ; in faith still offering
Simple obedience, never doubting Him,
Nor leaning upon arm of flesh, which tried
Is found but vain ; no sceptre, but a reed,
Which, when we lean upon it, falls with us !

SECOND ELDER.

But Jephtha is our Judge, our chosen one ;
His rule will bring us, as we fondly hope,
Peace and Prosperity, twin angels sent
By our task-master to console our toils.
I doubt not he is chosen instrument
To save us from the vaunting Philistine,
And saucy Ammonite ; His choice, Who made
And governs this His world ; in whose hand is
The mystic chain, the linked harmony,
That keeps in order all His universe,
And in its own appointed track restrains
Each gliding orb, that in the silent path
Of boundless space, by Him projected, wheels.

CHORUS.

Or ever that the world was framed,
Or in the star-eyed firmament
The Regent of the Day was named;
Or from his treasury he lent
To the pale Queen of Night
Her robe of softened light;
Or ever from the waters rose,
Well-pleasing to the Maker's sight,
The million wonders that compose
This garden of delight;
Or that a shape of life was seen
Amid this new-created green;
To Him, Who sits upon the throne,
Was all our being known;
Unseen Himself, though seeing all,
Far off, yet ever near;
By Him the nations rise or fall,
The God of Battles and our Sovran Fear.

Our generations come and go,
With intermingled death and birth;
On Pleasure waits attendant Woe;
But still abides the living Earth.

The ever-circling Sun
For aye his course doth run ;
He rises and he hastes to rest ;
Turns to the east, then turns him back,
And journeys to the west,
A southward or a northward track.
The inconstant Wind is ever found
Going his circuits round and round ;
The Rivers run into the sea
That never overflows ;
The Rivers to their source flow back again,
Reflowing ever to the mighty main :
But all the Wonders at their task that be,
We know not, nor the highest creature knows—

He knows them all ; His golden chain
The universal system draws ;
His creature-worlds confess His reign,
And move obedient to His laws.
Our fathers at His bidding fight ;
They win by His prevailing might ;
He crowns the warrior's toil ;
He gives the battle-spoil ;
And now He goes before them,
And hangs His banner o'er them !

For them our prayers we breathe;
For them these garlands wreath;
For them the victim bind,
His brow with flowery chaplets twined.
Now, Father! hear our voice,
And bid our souls rejoice;
Send home our men again
Safe from the battle-plain:
That shawms and flutes may sound,
While we in dance go round:
And echoing hills to all our valleys tell,
The Captain of the Lord has fought for Israël.

But see! On yonder hill a runner comes,
And now he dashes down the gentle slope;
'Tis Jared, fathers! 'Tis the messenger!
The swiftest-foot of all the Gileadites,
Save Zebul. He'll be here or e'er that one
Could tell again good Jotham's parable,
Or sing the song of Miriam; he's here!

Enter JARED.

ADAD.

What is thy news? Important, great it is,
For fiery Expedition plumed thy course,

Unflagging to the end. Speak, Jared ! Speak !
Nay, poor, poor boy ! Now sit thee gently down,
Be patient till thy outspent breath recruits ;
For over-speed has quite o'er-mastered thee.
See how the heavy drops pour from his hair !
How wan he is ! With freshness from yon fount,
Dipping a hyssop-branch, besprinkle him.
His colour comes ! Some water for his lips ;
From the cool comfort he will soon revive.
What loving zeal has not this poor boy shewn—
God of our fathers ! bless him with——

JARED.

They fight !

They fight !

CHORUS.

Who wins ? Is Jephtha's banner up,
Advanced into the thickest of the foes ?
How was it ? Is it ? Will it be ? Speak, Jared !

JARED.

They fight ! But what the issue will be, is,
I know not ; for the ruler stationed me
Upon the hill-top, neighbouring his tent,


And bade me, when I saw their battles join,
To speed away, and tell our reverend elders.
I saw the Philistine—the giant Chief—
With mighty strides advance before his men,
As though himself would trample down our host.
I heard his dreadful shout ; and shout for shout
Each of his impious swarm loud-bellowing sent ;
Upon the left injurious Ammon pressed,
With steadier tramp, more orderly array.
Their King was in the field. I heard the shock,
And saw them shaken ; but I sped away,
As Jephtha bade me, and from him announce,
“ The Lord will fight for Israel to-day.”

SECOND ELDER.

Went Gilead to battle, with the hope
Of Jephtha ? Did their brisk advance declare
Recovered courage ? Did they tread upon
The bridges of the battle, as men sure
Of their good cause, their leader, and themselves ?

JARED.

Gilead was filled with joy, as drunk with wine ;
And every man shewed high heroic thoughts ;
In face, and step, and gesture ; every one



Looked war and victory. I knelt to Jephtha,
I prayed to him, and wept ; wept, prayed in vain,
That he would not discharge me from the field.
The stern one smiled, and pointed to the hill,
Unlovely and uncomfortable hill !
And I must needs obey him, though to die
For Jephtha, fighting with the Ammonite,
Had more become a youth of Gilead.
From that near hill I marked the onward waves
Of bristling battle ; our impatient men
Could scarcely be restrained ; but Jephtha stood,
As looking on a pleasant spectacle
Of harvest or of vintage—calmly stood,
While onward, onward swept that dangerous surge.
But all at once the mighty warrior gave
Voice to his gesture, to his gesture life.
He waved his hand and pointed to the foe,
And only said (I heard him from my hill),
“ Upon them, men ! The Lord is with us now ! ”
I saw the great outburst of Gilead,
And now am here to tell you ; speed me back.

SECOND ELDER.

Be not so restless, boy, but stay thee here:
The battle will be done, the harvest reaped,

Or ever you could reach the bloody field.
Did Jephtha at the peep of earliest dawn
Serry his ranks for battle, or once more
Propound to Ammon terms of lasting peace ?

JARED.

He sent a herald even with the dawn,
And asked the King of Ammon wherefore war,
When peace invited him to gentler terms,—
To leave our heritage, himself unshent.
But Ammon laughed, and said the land was his,—
A pleasant land he loved too much to leave,
Of right derived from his great ancestors,
Whom Egypt's bondmen, unprovoked, had spoiled.
To whom the herald, by the judge foretaught
Rejoinder apt to this expected plea,
Made answer that his claim was nothing worth ;
For if by conquest or prescription grew
A title, then the land was Israël's,
Who, when he fled from Egypt, found no friends,
But only foes ; yet, trusting in His might
Whose will had made him bondman, for his sins,
To cattle-worshippers, he won and kept
Quiet possession for three hundred years,
And by His favour still would keep his own,
Deriving it as gift direct from God.

SECOND ELDER.

What said the King of Ammon? Was he not
Disposed to peace; or did he scorn our Trust?

JARED.

He laughed more bitterly; and bade him go,
And tell tongue-doughty Jephtha that he long
Had waited for the battle, and his gods
Cherished his fortune; he would keep his own;
And Israël must either quit or fight.

ADAD.

The Ammonite, strong in his serried host,
His horses, and his chariots, would despise
Our few compared with his. But our true strength
Is, that we have no chariots and no horse;
For the great Captain aye will do us right,
Whenever we in faith will call on Him.—
But what said Jephtha?

JARED.

Nothing he replied;
But in his inner tent he shut himself;
Nor lingered long; and when he came from prayer,
A radiant light was kindled in his eyes;

Then instant ran a rumour, he had seen
The Glory, or the Captain of the host.
All felt assured the victory was promised :
He ordered me and Zebul to the hill ;
Him to speed off whenever Ammon fled,
Me when their battles joined. All that I know,
Ye now know, fathers ; have I leave to go ?

ADAD.

Perverse one ! Go ! Away, away he bounds,
Renewed in youthful strength ; but ere he reach
The field he left, stern Ammon will have fought
His latest fight—his doom be writ in blood.
For swift in execution is the Lord,
And terrible in vengeance ; when the blast
Of wrath goes forth, it touches and it kills ;
The strongest walls of cities crumble down ;
The sword devours the mightiest multitude,
Though clad in mail, and led by matchless skill
Of warrior, victor in a hundred fights.
I doubt me not that Jephtha's prayer was heard ;
But fear me that the public joy will be
Accompanied with wailing for himself.
Perchance by self-devotion he will gain
A lasting memory ; for he is one
Of those rare spirits, who, from earliest life,

Are marked for some mysterious destiny.
Soon as he learned to think, he loved to roam
Apart from men, and nursed in solitude
His dreams of glory, and communion held
With all the loftiest mysteries of thought.
I marked his childhood, when he dwelt at Tob,
And saw his wildest moods; the boy was sad,
But many thought he was not loved at home;
The boy was wild and wayward; but I read
Some signs, which to my thought prefigured him,
In all his flights, beyond the common mark.
He was as Ishmael in his father's house;
It is no wonder that he fled away,
And dwelt in solitudes; and soon we heard
That some young robber, with a growing band,
Wasted the Philistine. To Tob he came,
And reigned a prince, where he was lately scorned:
His band became an army, and his deeds
Flew with the four winds. When some wild exploit
Made pale the gentile mother, who was cursed
By gentile lips but Jephtha? When the tribes
Revolted from the faith, who only scorned
To be at peace with Ammon? Only Jephtha!
And when their burden grew too much to bear,
Whom did the people choose in their distress
For leader? Only Jephtha! Such the man.

SECOND ELDER.

Whence grew that sadness, which we all observe
To overcome him like a sullen cloud,
Obscuring suddenly the clear bright blue
Of a spring sky, e'en when he smiles upon
His only child unutterable love?

ADAD.

'Tis sometimes seeming sorrow, when high Thought
Usurps the mastery o'er noble minds,
And takes away the sense of sights and sounds,
And tasks the inner senses,—Consciousness;
Imagination, with her crowded world
Of things here, there, past, present, and to come;
Faith, the revealer of the world unseen;
And Memory, which from the times foregone
Snatches the precious wisdom of the wise,
And makes the sepulchres of dead men yield
Light for the living. Wisdom thus looks sad.
For who is read in that grave mystery,
The human mind, with all its gushing rills
Of passions and affections, thoughts and aims,
Which stir the motives of the fleshly frame,
And waken all the sense-strings of the man;
But he must needs in growing wise grow sad?

This wisdom Jephtha has ; chastised by grief,
For public failures, and from private loss,
The wise man, judge, and widower, is sad.

SECOND ELDER.

And widowed long ; methinks it had been well
To find a mother for his Miriam.

ADAD.

He wived, and happily. How did he tend,
With all a husband's love and father's hope,
The lovely flower, from which the promised bud,
Yet growing, was to blossom and to bloom !
She bore a woman-child ; and so for him
The promise was not, though he hoped from him
It might be yet derived. She left him lone,
(Save that her child renewed his Miriam,)
Too sadly taught to try experiments
In woman's fondness for a child not her's,
And at a hearth round which her newer growth
And dearer blooms. His father had a wife,
Who was to him no mother ; and he loved
The little fondling innocent too much
To risk her comfort. Though he hopes in her
To keep his race, I doubt me he will grieve

To part with her ; yet, from the war returned,
He'll choose for her a husband from his tribe.

SECOND ELDER.

His choice not made, will he keep festival,
And let the maiden please her heart—or eye ?

ADAD.

She loves as he loves, nor will she dispute
His best and bravest is the bravest, best,
And beautifullest. But whoe'er this day
Of all our youth strikes crowned Ammon down,
(If his own arm achieve it not), or gains
Mightiest renown for daring hardihood,
Is like to win the loveliest Miriam,
Guerdon and garland of his high desert.

SECOND ELDER.

This fig-tree lends to us a pleasant shade,
Or else the generous heat that makes to swell
The corn's white pulp, and brings upon the grape
Its darkening colour, would oppress our age.
E'en Jephtha will be wearied with his arms,
Nor loath to quit his harness ; Let us in ;

Soon will our homesteads ring and ring again,
When Zebul comes announcing victory.

[*Exeunt* ELDERS.]

CHORUS.

The Guardian sits above !
No tyrant, to affright and slay,
And scare our gentle doves away !
He comforts every heart that grieves ;
Who leave Him, only those He leaves.

For Heaven itself is love !
The rose-dews of the early morn,
Mid which the light of love is born,
Are diamonded by many suns,
To light the homes of Shining Ones !

Yes ! Love is all in all !
The birds, that welcome in the spring,
Express it ever as they sing ;
It is the life of Seraphim,
And the austerer Cherubim.

In adoration fall !
Centre of all the worlds that move,
And trace round Him their paths of love,

The Sun and Mover of the whole
Breathes peace into the mourner's soul.

Too high, too high the theme !
We know not yet what we shall be :
But this we know, that we shall see,
Who are His own, by covenant sealed,
The glory of the Lord revealed.

But vain is Ammon's dream !
The thief has like a recreant fled ;
The boaster is discomfited ;
He flies ! He flies, with barren brow !
And why ? Our God is with us now.

But see ! The beauty of our valleys,
The apple of our eye, comes forth ;
The light of joy is on her brow,
And yet she pauses in her step.—
Fleet as the roe young Miriam,
Than any stock-dove gentler far ;
On either eyelid, dropping light,
The dew of Morning sits ;
Her song excels the singing-bird's ;
She is our Bird of Paradise.
For what more loving, lovely creature

Steps in beauty on the earth ?
Her gentle presence would not scare
The playful bird upon the lawn,
Nor the mother-waiting fawn.
So fair, so sweet and innocent,
She were a fitting bride for man
As yet untarnished by defeature,
Who yet had everything to lose,—
A queen of beauty for an Eden bower.
She marks us not ; or else would come,
And let her sisters share her thoughts.
It may be that she hears a voice
We cannot hear ;
Or that her mind is lighted up
By some winged minister,
To her inner eye revealing
The shadow of the Wonderful.
Whate'er it be, though rapt, she is not sad ;
And now she comes.

MIRIAM.

Dear sisters ! Even now the fight is won,
Ammon discomfited and trampled down !
I feel like some blest creature, that enjoys
Our privilege of thought, and is not shut
Up in the body, which is sepulchre

To that which only keeps it sweet, the soul,
Immortal in a mortal prison pent !
I feel as one might do with power instinct
Of free and disembodied Consciousness,
Who sails upon the wafture of a breath
Of purest Air, and sees, with keenest sense,
The peoples of the various elements ;
Or insect polities ; well-ordered states,
Which swarm the hills and valleys of a leaf ;
Admiring in the least, as in the vast,
The wisdom of the great Ineffable ;
Or else, upon the extreme skirt of Space,
To mark some new sun, newly made and moved,
With his dependencies ; or else to hear,
Angelic harpings on the mystic Mount,
Where, curtained in His solemn glory, sits
The Architect ; while, ever and anon,
The brightness is subdued to roseate hues
Of winning softness, that who wait and look
May in that melting gush of tender light
Behold the loving shadow of His presence !
For now I know that my Redeemer lives,
And at the latter day will stand upon
The earth ; and though the worm consume this body,
Yet shall I see Him. Sisters ! Hear the Voice
Of Wisdom speaking by a sister's lips.

We are immortal ! And the Woman's seed
Shall bruise the Serpent's head ! We look to Him,
In faith prospective ; Champion of the Seed
Of Jacob, he will scatter down our foes,
And burn them up like stubble ! Yet again
I heard the soft Voice whisper me, " Prepare !"
Favoured of women ! Must I not rejoice,
Companions of my childhood ? Yes ! He comes !
I see a Glory ; but I cannot see
That loveliest Incarnation ; yet I think
That I shall see Him, an anointed King,
The King ! The Son of Man ! The Wonderful,
Enthroned and diademed !

CHORUS.

Dear Miriam !

See ! Her bright visage is becoming pale,
O'erclouded from the parting of the Light
That burned in her ; her senses are in swoon,
After high-wrought excitement. Lay her down,
Gently and tenderly, upon this slope
Of odorous herb and flower, till she recover
From this oppression. Surely has her speech
Been of the future, an apocalypse
Shewn by the Spirit, which has o'ermastered her.
We never yet have seen our sister thus.

It was of bridal and triumphant love
She spake in vision ; doubtless she will be
A favoured one, perhaps the favoured one,
The mother of our Hope, the promised King !
Over her cheek, transparent, now returns
The glow of animation ; as a child,
Nestling and pillowed on its mother's arm,
Sleeps quietly ; and ever, in its dream,
Smiles, as some pleasant thought makes music for
Its comfortable sleep,—our sister lies,
As if in sleep and in the land of dreams !
Exquisite Miriam ! Sweet harmony
Of gentlest spirit and of loveliest shape !
She stirs—and from the fringes of her eyes
The dewy star-light, which they shaded, shines.
She wakens up.—How is it with thee, sister ?

MIRIAM.


Methought I was among you, and I saw
Strange sights and beautiful, and heard a Voice
More soft and sweet than aught I ever heard
Of bird, or sighing air, or human tone,
Address me as His chosen ; and I told
My sisters what I saw and heard, in part ;
And then I thought I was diffused in sleep,
And in my dream saw, heard the same, and more ;

And, lo ! I wake me up, and see you round me,
Each with a friendly bunch of odorous green,
As ye were fanning me while yet I slept
And saw bright visions. I remember me ;
My good nurse and myself did busy us
With house appointments ; she with cates and viands ;
While I with choice of fruits and freshest flowers
Twined garlands, and set off my father's hall
To best advantage ; when, this done, I went
Into my chamber, and was comforted
With shadowy glimpses of some brighter joy,
That made my heart glad, though I read it not.
Kind sisters ! Have ye never known, asleep
Or waking, when the spirit is between
Two worlds, the seen and the invisible,
And longs to be at liberty in that,
But is by strong constraint chained down to this,
Yet on the confines of that glorious world
Hovers, and looks upon the goodly scene,
Surpassing Palestine, as Palestine
All of Earth's regions, where the skies look love,
And Shining Ones scatter the dew of peace,
And every city sparkles with the hues
Of many-coloured brightness, and the gates
Stand open, and the King's high pursuivant
Proclaims with trumpet tone distinct and clear,

"Come in ! Come in ! The King holds festival !"
Have ye not known the spirit then dragged down
E'en as a bird that wanton boys have fettered
But with a length of string, just as it thought
To fly away—away, and be at rest ?

CHORUS.

We have not felt, but we can fancy this.
'Tis even as when Moses, from the top
Of Pisgah, looked from lofty Nebo down
Upon the lands of Gilead and Dan,
Ephraim, Manasseh, Napthali, and Judah,
To the far limit of the outmost sea ;
And saw the south, the ripe and gushing vale
Of Jericho, the city of the plain
Of palm-trees, far as Zoar ; with his eyes,
He saw the land of promise ; but might not
Go over thither. When an envious cloud
O'erhangs the hills, and will nor melt nor pass,
But hides the bright face of the glorious day,
We try in vain to look beyond and through it ;
And then a heaviness comes over us.
And such a cloud shuts out that brighter world
Thy dream was of, when we would look on it.
We never, never see it—not in dreams !



MIRIAM.

Just such a cloud has hidden from my view
What I in vision or in dream beheld ;
And now 'tis like the shadowy Indistinct,
Moving or resting on a mountain-crest,
Not opening into forms and images,
Which late we saw, but now are mingled up
In strange confusion ; and while yet we look,
The misty mass itself has passed away,
And forth the mountain-head peers nakedly !
Thus, sweet-hearts ! has my soul's dimmed mirror lost
The glorious images which then I saw ;
But I am happy still, for ye are here.
Has Zebul come ?—Not yet ? Look, look, behold
Him yonder ! Think ye not he runs like Zebul ?

CHORUS.

'Tis Zebul ! Like a courier of the air,
Or roebuck in his hour of vigorous speed,
He comes amain. It is a glorious thing
To look upon—a beautiful young man !
His limbs thrown out at top of exercise,
When in the race he bounds and leaps away ;
Or in the festive dance he graceful moves ;
Or wakens music from the reed or harp ;

Or listens to the Elders modestly ;
Or plies the pleasant labours of the field,
Or sings among his sheep ; or whispering breathes
Love to the lovely—always beautiful.

MIRIAM.

True ; but the face of Eld more glorious shews,
When what the cheek has lost of full and fair,
It more than gains from stamp of thought severe,
And energised by mind, and shining with
Light from the inner lamp, and touched withal
By passing hues of immortality,
More bright and frequent as the flesh more yields
To that which underworks it, and the glad soul
Feels that its prison-house is crumbling down :
Looking on such a face of such a man,
We half forget the saint is yet in flesh.

Enter ZEBUL.

Well, Zebul, is my father near ? How near ?
I ask not of the battle ; for I know
That Ammon, like a jocund wassailer,
Came to the conflict, and has had his dream.

ZEBUL.

Ammon is down, and Jephtha will be here

With his best speed. I left him in full chase,
He and his captains, of the rabble rout;—
It was a glorious show, and every man
Seemed an Avenging Angel as he smote.

MIRIAM.

Call forth our Elders ; lead old Adad forth.
Here, sisters ! When the judge, my father, comes——
Nay, we will meet him—he will soon be here—
With timbrels and with dances. But my nurse
Must hear our tidings.

[*Exit* MIRIAM.]

CHORUS.

Like a shape of light,
She has departed ; here our Elders come,
Preventing us.

ADAD.

Quick, Zebul ! Tell us all !
Ammon is vanquished, and the Philistine
Is gathered by the Reaper ? Is it so ?
But, Jephtha ! Is the mighty Captain safe ?


ZEBUL.

Ammon has fought, and lost the prize he fought for,
And paid for forfeit his insulting life ;

The Philistine will never vaunt again
At Gaza of his deeds in Gilead.
Jephtha is safe ; he played the captain's part
Victoriously, heroically.
He discrowned proud Ammon ;
From his brow he tore the diadem ;
He trampled it ; and where the Angel led,
He trod their mighty down.
They fled away ; but what is flight of man,
When Wrath is in the field ?
As to the sickle falls the corn,
The Philistine and Ammonite
Fell before Gilead ; as a whirlwind,
Irresistible, o'erthrows a stately tower—
Even as the walls of Jericho
Fell at the trumpet's blast,
They fell.

SECOND ELDER.

The overthrow entire, and safe
The leader ! 'Tis a mighty victory.
The Lord is with his people ! His the praise !
Our eighteen years of servitude are gone,
And we are free !



ADAD.

Redeemed Israel !

Shall sit beneath his fig-tree and his vine ;
The tabor and the harp again be heard ;
The daughters of our tribes again be seen
At solemn festival. Ammon is gone !
The insulting Philistine no more shall claim
Tribute nor worship ; with lewd look no more
Shall they bring shame to matron or to virgin—
The uncircumcised dogs ! I spit on them !
Corruption is their bed-mate, and the worm
Wanton shall dally with their dainty flesh !


SECOND ELDER.

Tell us, if thou dost know, in more detail
The several circumstances of the fight.

ZEBUL.

Fight it was none, unless it be to fight
Where Conquest is on one side ; hideous Rout,
Disaster, and Dismay, upon the other.
Jared would tell you how their battles joined—
(I met him half-way hence, running as though
The Avenger was behind him, and he fled
For Refuge ; but I told him, as I run,

That all was over; and he fell, as shot,
Sudden, by arrow-point; sank down and wept.)
For me it now remains to tell events,
Big with our fortunes, fleet as words that tell them!
There was a mighty sound of rushing war;
Neighing of horses; roll of chariot-wheels;
Clangour of arms; a roar immense of shouts.
The hills reverberated to the shock;
The heavens in startled replication pealed;
The echoing earth rang to the fearful rush;
The armies shocked! Then overcame them first
A pall of showery darkness; then a blaze
Of light, flash upon flash! Earth trembling reeled;
The nations were subdued; their hearts were low—
Low as the ground their corpses lie upon!
Then Jephtha shouted, "Lord! We follow thee!"
Our people shouted, "Lord! We follow thee!"
The leader struck the King of Ammon down;
Each shepherd was a hero; husbandman,
And beardless boy, pursued the work of death.
Their horses and their chariots saved them not;
They perished; Arnon never more shall see
Their braveries. Few out of many fled;
I left our people busy in pursuit.



SECOND ELDER.

Was the great Angel present to the sight
Of friend and foeman ?

ZEBUL.

Him I did not see.
But Jephtha shouted, " Lord ! We follow thee !"
Our people shouted, " Lord ! We follow thee !"
Foe felt his presence ; Jacob knew Him there ;
The thunder-cloud of Wrath burst over them.
The Lord our God is great, and we have peace !
I leave you now for rest—sweet after toil !

[*Exit.*

ADAD.

The Judge will soon be here ; for he will haste
To see his daughter and revisit home—
How pleasant home, when one has been abroad !
How passing pleasant after battle-toil !
For the unhuman deafening din of arms,
The hideous crash, the curses and the groans,
The bloody profanation of green earth,—
To taste the quiet of the peaceful fields,
The dropping down of water from the rock,
The hum of bees and sounds of rural life ;

The cordial welcome and the fond embrace
Of friends and family ; to lie upon
Our own familiar bed, and see again
Familiar faces, human, or the creatures
Tamed to our hands, dependents on our care !
How dear to him, who comes to be enrolled
A Worthy of his country !

SECOND ELDER.

Let us forth
To meet our Jephtha ; though our age soon tires,
With slow steps we may reach yon gentle slope ;
And if he will not stay to talk with us,
We may at least change greeting.

ADAD.

Let us go ;
For though we are not of his house, we love
His person, while we venerate the Judge.
A moment will he linger at the hill,
And look down on his home ; a moment only ;
For then the father will surprise the chief,
And he will only think of Miriam,
His bud of beauty and his pearl of price !

[*Exeunt.*



CHORUS.

The Lord, whose power exceeds the scan
Of angel, and the praise of man ;
He is my Strength, Salvation, and my Song ;
To Him dominion, honour, praise, belong.
To Him, who maketh Israël rejoice,
Our God, our father's God—to Him I raise my voice.
Great is the Lord ! Let this attest
Proud Egypt's bravest and her best ;
Down in the sea, while yet with anger drunk,
Down like a stone the horse and rider sunk ;
They rushed to battle, and they found a grave,
Dashed down and overwhelmed, beneath the Red-sea
wave.

The waters stood on either side,
A fiery Pillar Jacob's guide.
“ We will pursue ! ” exclaimed the blinded foe—
“ Pursue and spoil ! ” Onward they rushed ; but, lo !
A mighty ocean crushed them in their pride ;
The world of waters fell—their host of warriors died.


By Thee, most Highest ! Egypt fell ;
The ruin none survived to tell ;

Dead in an instant, of their proud array
No trace remains ; for many a weary day
Her anxious eyes did Pharaoh's mother strain
For him, she never more might look upon again.

Lord ! While we tremble and adore,
Sorrow and Fear shall go before
Our Leader's banner. Planted by Thy hand,
Jacob shall flourish in his pleasant land,
And Edom's dukes and Moab's chiefs shall flee,
And Canaan's tribes surcease, dissolved away by Thee.

Most Highest ! In the battle-strife,
What foe can touch at Jacob's life ?
On Thee the Chief shall call in battle-hour ;
On Thee the maiden in her modest bower ;
To Thee all glory, praise, and homage be—
Our Harvest-God in peace, in war our Panoply.

Hark ! Distant voices, and the rush of feet !
Look to the water-brook, along the track
Arched with the long and leafy colonnade,
Whose branches overhang the murmuring stream,
And interlacing meet over the water,
Where from the hill-side bends the nearest road ;—



The gleam of warriors! 'Tis the Judge himself;
And now he leaves his train, and rushes on!

Enter NURSE and MIRIAM.

MIRIAM.

Why, sisters! thus intent? It is my father!
With timbrels and with dances will we meet him.
Come! Let him hear us, maids of Gilead!
A song for Jephtha! Dances, garlands, hymns!

CHORUS.

Strike the harp! Strike the harp!
In honour of Jephtha,
The hero we love,
Who has rescued his people.
He went to the battle!
He went and he conquered,
And now he is here!
The maidens of Judah
Shall sing to his glory;
The Prophet and Priest
Shall remember his story;
The minstrel shall sing it,
And Jephtha the Judge
Be renowned for ever!


Proud Ammon came on,
But he went not again !
The Philistine raged,
And the Philistine lies
A morsel for vultures,
A spoil for the dogs,
On Gilead's plain !

The triumph is won,
And the Chieftain is ours,
We dance and we sing
For Manasseh restored,
For Gilead free,
In honour of Jephtha,
The glorious Judge !

[JEPHTHA *enters hastily ; his Daughter rushes forward to embrace him ; he at first clasps her tenderly, then suddenly shakes her off, and seems overcome with horror.*

MIRIAM.

My father ! What ! No answer for thy child—
Nor yet a look ! Why has my lord withdrawn
His favour from his handmaid ? Oh, my father !



It was not thus, my father ! we have met,
After a short, short absence from thy home,
When thy own Miriam still flew to thee,
But never, never was repulsed as now.
One word ! One look ! One smile ! To tell thy child,
Thy only one, she has not lost her father.—
I kneel to thee, nor will I leave thy knees
Till thou dost answer me. Tears ! Tears from Jephtha !
And on his home-return from victory !——
I can no more ; speak, father ! By my mother,
The sainted memory, whose child I am,
Speak to me, even if it be in anger.

JEPHTHA.

My daughter ! Thou hast brought me very low,
And thou art one of them that trouble me.

MIRIAM.

How, whence, my father ? never in my thought
Have I offended thee—what can it be ?
Thou tremblest, and the champion of our tribes
Melts into sorrow, and the strong man weeps,
High Jephtha sobs. Dear, dearest father, speak !
The grief, that is imparted, is less bitter,—
Have I offended thee ?

JEPHTHA.

My precious child !

Thou hast not ; but the bitterness of death
Is on me ; yet, perhaps, will pass away.
Time wears out sorrow, or the sorrowful :
I'll tell it thee anon—not yet—not now.

MIRIAM.

I saw thee come along with rapid step,
And when I clung to thee, I felt thy clasp
Returning my affection, strong as death—

JEPHTHA.

As death ! The dead return no more to bless
The living hearts which hve their memories.

MIRIAM.

Thou thinkest of my mother—

JEPHTHA.

Of her daughter,
Her only one, my only one, my child.

MIRIAM.

And what of me ? Why didst thou start away,



And shrink from me, as though a grisly form
Of unclean spirit, darting from a tomb,
Had clutched thee? Why didst shun thy Miriam?
Why didst thou shake me off, as thing unclean
Had touched thee, impious, abominable?
Why didst thou fear to look on what thou lovest?

JEPHTHA.

Lovest! I think no mother more can love
The new-born Life that from her bosom draws
The sincere milk; heart-lightening Innocence!
That knows not, cannot know, the world of love
That mother-bosom, yearning, cherishes.
Thou wert my treasury of mighty loves,
And hopes too lofty—but His will be done!
He gives and takes away. Thou hast to go
A journey; Jephtha and his child must part—

MIRIAM.

It will not be for long, nor far, dear father?

JEPHTHA.

'Tis very distant, yet is very near;
The time of meeting may be soon—or never.
Not so! The loving hearts that intertwine,


Though parted for a time must re-unite,
Revivified in that immortal clime,
Where Sorrow comes not ; and re-flourishing
In ageless youth and undecaying life,
Shall no more suffer anguish, fear divorce.
At least the faithful should believe there is
This better being—immortality
Of love ;—dost think to see and know thy mother ?

MIRIAM.

I trust so, since I see her in my dreams ;
And if we are renewed, as we believe,
In true life, when this dreamy one is past,
Our good dreams here are there realities.
But yet I understand thee not ; thy voice
Not often speaks in riddles ; plain thy speech
To all, and most to me. Speak out, dear father !

JEPHTHA.

When I went thither, and the Ammonite
With mighty forces threatened Gilead,
My thought was of my child ; not all my thought ;—
The people, and the obscure future writ
In changing characters I could not read ;
The battle-chances ; our offended Dread,
Who makes the wisest calculations chance



To the fore-casting schemer ; but distinct
Only to Him his present-future shews ;—
The father and the judge, the chief and man,
Were troubled in my bosom ; and I prayed—
The load was taken from my anxious heart,
And I felt hope, and in that kindling hope
Was Victory. The Spirit came upon me,
And by His teaching I went forth to meet
The sons of Ammon, nothing doubting Him,
Whose balance weighs the nations. Then I vowed
A vow ; “If Thou wilt, without fail, deliver
Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be,
That whatsoever cometh first to meet me
Out of my doors, when I return in peace,
Shall surely be the Lord's ; burnt-offering
I'll offer it.” The vow was ratified ;
The prayer was granted ; must the vow be kept ?

MIRIAM.

Thou knowest, Jephtha ! Judge of Israël !
There is no going back from vows to Him,
And thou the last to make such forfeiture.

JEPHTHA.

'Tis even so ; there is no going back.
We smote the sons of Ammon, and, behold !

No living thing did meet me from my doors
Before thee; thou, thou only art my vow.

MIRIAM.


My father! Thou hast spoken to the Lord;
Now do to me according to thy vow;
For He hath taken vengeance of thy foes,
Even of Ammon for thee. Be it so!

JEPHTHA.

High-hearted woman! Girl of Gilead!
The judge declares thee signed and consecrate,
Devoted for thy people; but the father——
The victim is his child—his only one!
Yet I resist not; for His will is right.
My child! My beautiful! My Miriam!
My hope of hopes! Mine own and only one!

MIRIAM.

My father! I am well content to die
For thee and Gilead. But let me go,
Till two moons wane, and then thy vow be paid;
I and my fellows to go up and down
Upon the mountains, my virginity
Bewailing; since for me that promise is not.



JEPHTHA.

It shall be so, my daughter ! My sweet child !
And thou must die, die in thy virgin prime ;
Unknown the chaste communion of true love,
The conjugal caress ; on thee no child,
No man-child born into the world, shall smile,
And stretch his little arms to thy embrace,
And draw, with dimpled cheek, from thy chaste bosom
Nature's sweet unadulterate aliment.
No troop of virgins shall, with loving hands,
Link a fond circle round thee, on the day
Of Celebration ; wreaths, nor coronal,
Shall twine thy hair and strew thy onward path—
Mine own ! My only ! and my beautiful !

MIRIAM.

Father ! I pray thee grieve not ; for the bride
Of His election, daughter of His love,
Must not go to Him grieving ; though no boy,
No princely boy, thy daughter's first-born child,
No little Jephtha shall repay thy love,—
I am not childless. When in Palestine
A daughter of our people doeth well,
In thought of Miriam, she is my child ;


When, taught by my example, any man
Does well and lives in faith, he is my son.

JEPHTHA.

Like a lopt branch that never yet bore fruit,
Thou fallest on the ground. The fig will bloom ;
The vine will grow, and give as heretofore
Its rich ripe clusters ; lilies and roses make
Earth fragrant ; fountains murmur as before ;
Summer and Spring will come and pass away,
But thou no more shalt listen to the song
Of singing birds ; Autumn and Winter crown
And strip the rolling year—and thou not know it !
My incompatible, unfruitful child !

MIRIAM.

Thy child unfruitful, incompatible !
The father of the faithful did not call
His Isaac so ; nor will my father deem
His daughter is unfruitful in her faith.
I grieve not that I am burnt-offering.
Content thee, father ! Shall the righteous Judge
Be to his Judge unrighteous ? Creature call
The great Creator to a controversy ?
Then let it be a willing sacrifice.
And I, as one betrothed, will try myself



In maiden meditation ; then will come
Forth to the people, in a bridal dress,
And garlanded, for them and thee true victim ;
A holy love upon my cheek and brow,
Smiles on my lip, and gladness in mine eye ;
For such I feel the grace vouchsafed to me.
Is it a small thing to be consecrate,
Devoted to the Lord ? To die for thee,
My father, for my people, and my loved,
The nursing mothers and their little ones,
The young men and the maids of Israël ?
Though happy here, I seek a better home,
A lovelier life and happier happiness.
Thy blessing, father !


JEPHTHA.

When thy mother gave
Thee newly born into mine arms, she said,
Here is a blessing for thee from the Lord ;
And it was so ; to me thy life has been
Blessing and comfort ; and to Israël
Thou art a blessing ; to the latest times
Thy happy memory shall be preserved ;
And it shall be a solemn ordinance,
The daughters of our people yearly go,
For four days every year, from year to year,

To commune with the daughter of the Judge,
Jephtha the Gileadite. Lo! thou art blest!

MIRIAM.

Sisters! We with the early morn will seek
The hills where we have wandered oft in sport;
And think ye only bring me on the way
To pleasant gardens and delicious airs;
The passage thither dismal to the sense
Of mortal apprehension; but there comes
A light upon my soul, which from that dark
Takes all its horrors. It becomes not us,
The children of His ever-wakeful love,
To murmur at His counsels. What He wills
Is ever right. He opens and He shuts
The life-spring of His creatures; at His voice
The mountains quake; His breath awakes the flowers;
He takes the life He gives; but in my soul
There lives a nature which can never die.
Have we not talked with Him upon the hills
In pleasant hymns? Have we not often felt
The shadow of His Presence over us?
Mere mortal could not with Immortal hold
Communion; nor could shape to thought and hope
Hereafter-being. We shall meet again,
Dear sisters! feel it, and be comforted.



Commiserable Nurse ! Mine own kind Nurse ;
My very mother, in thy love at least,
Thou seest it must be so. Dumb and confounded
By this most strange, unlooked-for providence !
Thou too be comforted. Think that I go
The certain way thou too must travel soon ;
And when we meet, what joy will then be thine !
Come, father ! Come ; for thou must tell me all
Thy late adventures, and must smile again,
And with thy kiss call on thy God to bless me,
Thy God and mine. The Judge of all the earth
Must needs do right. His will be done !

JEPHTHA.

Amen !

[*Exeunt JEPHTHA and MIRIAM.*]

CHORUS.

Alas ! best sister, must thou go from us,
That dreaded and uncomfortable way ;
Nor ever more at morn shall we wake up
Our darling, when the bright-faced Day-star shews
His glowing cheek, making the East one blush ;
Nor shall we crown our beautiful with flowers,
Nor 'mid the lilies sit with her and sing ;
Nor in the running water bathe with her,


Sheltered with veil of overhanging green,
The maiden grotto and the sylvan shade,
Where virgin Fear and Modesty keep watch ;
Nor ever more, like roes, run to the hills,
And gather fruits ; and hear the sweet birds talk ;
And tell us stories of the olden time ;
And weary us with pastime ; looking for
Honey amid the rocks or singing to
The whispering Airs ; or circling in the dance,—
A happy sisterhood—No more ! no more !

NURSE.

Where lately sat the green-throat singing-bird,
The raven sits ; where late the stock-dove coo'd,
The green is withered, and the bird is dead ;
The boding owl her watch-note hoarsely shrieks
In Beauty's chamber ; silent is the lute ;
The voice is silent, which once breathed for us
Its living music ; for the song the dirge ;
The marriage-coronals entwine the dead ;
Darkness for light ; ashes and dust for life——
My child ! My singing bird ! My tender dove !
My beauty, music, light, and life !—My child !

CHORUS.

With firmer step the Warrior goes,



And Sire and Daughter are agreed,
When two waning moons shall close
The Virgin's lustral Preparation
For the soul to quit its shell,
The Victor-victim then must bleed
For the safety of her nation—
A holocaust for Israël.

Amid the smoke of sacrifice,
And odours breathing thence
Of every precious spice,
Her Spirit with the mantle dight
(Although her body die)
Of new-recovered innocence,
Shall soar on silvery plumes of light—
A disembodied Liberty.

NURSE.

My child ! whose child I shall not see,
Nor ever lull it on my knee ;
I thought to dress thy bridal bed,
And, lo ! my beautiful is dead !
My darling one ! My sweetest love !
My pretty silver-winged dove !
Thou never more shall sing for me,—
I never more may fondle thee.


Thy smile did like a sunbeam fall
On me, on these, on all ;
But thou art gone—and I am left,
Of thee—of thee bereft.

CHORUS.

It is a pleasant thing
To look upon the sun ;
To hear the people sing,
Who build their nests upon
The trees of Palestine.

To see her is sweeter ;—
And sweeter is her song,
When the maidens greet her,
The lily-beds among,
Or underneath the vine.

She is fair as the Moon,
And is clear as the Sun ;—
No dove-mate is kinder ;—
At morning and at noon,
And when the day has run,
We seek, but cannot find her.



NURSE.

Let the sycamore stoop,
And the lily-bed droop,
The roses cease springing,
The birds hush their singing ;
My glory has departed,
And I am broken-hearted.

CHORUS.

Our glory has gone,
And we are alone
With Grief and with Sorrow ;
She went with the Night,
That never knew light,
Nor brought forth a morrow.

NURSE.

Who is it that fears
For the joy of my years ?
Though Death, the dread Reaper !
May crop, he can't keep her.
For she will arise
To her home in the skies,
As the dove that loves best
Still returns to her nest.

CHORUS.

Again it is joy !
For we see the returning
Of life to our dearest,
Where comes no annoy,
Nor the darkness of mourning,
But bliss the sincerest.

NURSE.

My child ! My child ! My playful bird,
That never from my presence stirred,
Except at morn to skir the mountain,
To sip the dew, or taste the water
In sparkles gushing from the fountain ;
My pretty, playful, precious daughter !

CHORUS.

My sister ! Darling of mine eyes !
Whom I shall never more surprise,
Soft stealing on thy lone communing
With flowers and birds, or hymn repeating
To pious echoes round, or tuning
Thy soft clear voice to words of greeting.



NURSE.

A flower cut down ! A life repealed !

CHORUS.

A spring shut up ! A fountain sealed !

NURSE.

The flower, cut down, will bloom no more ;
Nor life repealed is given again——

CHORUS.

Nor fountain sealed will trickle o'er,
Nor spring shut up, the pining plain,

NURSE.

A victim-lamb she dies for all,
Accepted in her nation's stead——


CHORUS.

My robe is rent, my tears fast fall,
My heart is dark,—my lovely dead !

NURSE.

On Carmel's reverend head
There sits a heavy cloud ;

The cowering birds shrink from their dread ;
The thunder-voice is loud.
It came and it went ;
The tempest is spent !
On the cedar sits Peace,
And the birds never cease
Their singing and mirth ;
And each on his bough
Cries Hail ! to the now
Of his beautiful earth.
At Jephtha's hearth sits Desolation ;
And Sorrow weeps beside his gate ;
While bleeding Love, in sequestration,
Droops speechless and disconsolate.
But the cloud will drop rain,
And the light be seen ;
And the heart have again
Its world of green :—
Who holds the waters in His hand,
Will guide us through the dreary land
Of Darkness, darken as it will ;
Our life is only what He makes ;
He loves the daughter whom He takes ;
He loves us still.
The vaunting Ammonite
Would do us foul despite—



He dies ! Our liberty is won ;
She dies ! His will in all be done !

CHORUS.

Take up a lamentation !
Woe ! Woe is me for her !
Where is a Comforter—
The cup of Consolation ?

NURSE.

He that gave again hath taken ;
Blest is He in all His ways !
For my child again shall waken,
And for ever sing His praise.


Then away with all sorrow,
Till ye come to the fountains
That water the valleys,
Till ye come to the mountains.
But I will go to her,
And talk to her smiling,
While she listens to me,
Or whispers, beguiling
The thrill of my pain,

Words soft as the dew,
With kisses as true
As the breathing of Light
On the sweet flower-cup,
Yet in slumber shut up.
For if I should weep,
My child could not sleep ;
And if for to-night
My heart will restrain
The gush of its sorrow—
It may break on the morrow.

[*Exit.*

CHORUS.

No voice of weeping now !
No wailing dirge express
The grief our bosom fills,
While we attend our Vow,
In her devotedness,
To the redeemed hills;
Till we with joyous chant,
And Victory's loud acclaim,
Reach with our Nazarite
The cedar-shaded haunt,
That long shall bear her name—
Our glory and delight !



With earnest speed his daughter rushed to meet
The glorious Chief, and sank down at his feet :
Love in her dove-like eyes, and debonair,
With virgin roses in her flowing hair,
The maiden met her warrior-sire,
And spake what love might best inspire ;
And on her lofty brow shone woman's pride
For man's achievements, to her sex denied,
When to son, father, husband, is decreed
For patriot battle-toil the hero's meed.


And she was his only one !
He had no other child,
Nor girl nor boy had he ;
On her, on her alone,
His only one, he smiled—
His home's sole charm was she.

But when his feet before
The father saw his daughter,
His pride of triumph fled ;
His garments straight he tore ;
He saw her dight for slaughter—
A victim garlanded.

“ My daughter ! Thou hast brought me very low ;
To thee, my joy ! my present grief I owe ;
For by my vow my darling now must bleed,
That living thing devote for Jacob freed.
Alas ! Alas ! My daughter !
Whom I have doomed to slaughter !
My heart may break ; my purpose may not falter ;
Thou art the Lord’s—to bleed upon his altar.”
The floodgate of his grief would not be kept ;
He bent—he bowed upon her neck—and wept !

But she, the noble lady !
Was not disheartened ;
She feared, she fainted not :
“ My father ! I am ready—
I give my votive head,
Nor mourn it is my lot.

If thou hast made a vow,
That vow must needs be kept—
I will not hinder thee ;
For low is Ammon now ;
Their sleep thy foes have slept,
And thine the victory—



I am the Lord's, who, father ! fought for thee,
That living thing devote for Jacob free :
But let me, father ! to the mountains go,
Till two moons wane, to wail my woman's woe,
Not for my death, but that I die
In profitless virginity ;—
I and my fellows to bewail and weep,
That on my bosom I must never keep
A man-child—never to my fond heart tell,
This is, perhaps, the Hope of Israël."

Thus to the hills will we
With our soul's darling go,
With her to wail and weep ;
But now no wail must be,
And now no tears must flow,
Till we have reached the steep.

For to the Lord of all
Our pomp is dedicate,
That leads the victim on ;
Two months our tears shall fall,
As early drops and late
Of dewy Lebanon.

Then shall the virgin-victim forth be led ;
Then shall our darling's precious blood be shed ;
While songs of triumph shall acclaim the skies,
And in the air Sabeian odours rise ;
But never shall her praises cease,
Whose blood is shed for Jacob's peace :
The daughters of our tribe shall yearly go
To mourn for her—four days their tears shall flow,
To mourn the virgin-girl, who virgin died,
To give our people peace, and quench fierce Am-
mon's pride.

NOTES.



NOTES.

Page 196, line 9.

The very grass enjoys the morwening.

THIS is the old English form for "morning:" it occurs several times in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, and I think ought to be restored to our poetry.

Page 196, line 18.

For, lo! the winter it is past, and gone.

The reader will perceive that I have taken this description of Spring from Solomon's Song.

Page 197, line 18.

Unfathomable are the ways.

IN the magnificent opening chorus of the "Suppliees" Æschylus has given a sublime description of the Sovran Power, from which I have derived some parts of this chorus.

Διὸς ἡμερὸς οὐκ εὐθάρτος ἐτύχθη.

Page 199, line 3.

From light's remotest orb as far.

We are lost in the contemplation of the immensity of the universe. It is not probable that the telescope of the astronomer has enabled him to perceive all the starry worlds. In the infinite space still deepening on, with instruments of higher power, artificial and natural, if such might be, he would probably discover more and more traces of the handiwork of the Architect. The mind of man cannot conceive a habitation for the Sun of His system, the great Centre of the universe. "I will give you an orange," said the excellent Fenelon to a boy in one of his parochial class examinations—"I will give you an orange if you can tell me where God is." "I will give you two," said the boy, "if you tell me where He is not."

"No one," says Professor Whewell, "who has dwelt on the thought of a Universal Creator and Preserver, will be surprised to find the conviction forced upon the mind by every new train of speculation, that, viewed in reference to Him, our space is a point, our time a moment, our millions a handful, our permanence a quick decay."

Page 201, line 4.

——— *though I did never see*

The soft, low, solemn Voice that spake to me.

"And I turned to see the Voice that spake with me."

Rev. i. 12.

Page 207, line 5.

——— *the bird of Paradise*

Made music.

The gorgeous bird that now goes under this name is not a singing bird. That of Paradise, the bird of birds, must have

been most musical, by whatever name called by the original name-giver, while he was yet in his life-garden.

Page 209, line 21.

Free, like the commoners of air and field.

"The birds that live i' the field,
On the wild benefit of nature, live
Happier than we; for they may choose their mates,
And carol their sweet pleasures to the Spring."

WEBSTER'S *Duchess of Melfi*.

This fine old poet has at last been brought within the reach of the general reader by Mr. Dyce, whose labours in honour of our neglected dramatists are worthy of all commendation. I hope he will do the same good turn to Beaumont and Fletcher; of whose works there is not yet a good edition.

Page 216, line 7.

There was a time when all the trees did meet.

This parable is recorded in the book of Judges (ix. 7—20). The Greeks claimed the invention of fables, which, however, were in familiar use among the Orientals, and especially the Hebrews, long before the light of civilization travelled towards Greece. This fable of Jotham is also related by Josephus (*Ant. lib. v. cap. 9*).

Page 217, line 2.

*And overthrew their towns, and sprinkled salt
Upon the ruins.*

This not unusual mark of detestation, in those times and countries, seems to have been a mode of execration. Some persons have fancifully imagined it was to render the places, sprinkled with salt, really barren. There could be no object of

this kind in so sprinkling the ruins of towns and cities. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt. The custom probably originated in the natural thought associated with that awful sign, that salt typified abomination. The execrable are not the least ready at the curse and the anathema. I conceive that it was an emphatic imprecation of barrenness and poverty, conveying a wish that the country might become salt and barren; and that it was not done with the view of effecting that barrenness by the action itself.

Page 218, line 1.

Or ever that the world was framed.

"One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth towards the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually; and the wind returneth according to its circuits. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again."

Ecclesiastes, chap. i.

Page 220, line 9.

That shawms and flutes may sound.

"With trumpets also and shawms, oh, shew yourselves joyful before the Lord the King."

Psalms xcvi. 7.

Page 222, line 18.

The bridges of the battle.

This is a Homeric expression, signifying the space between

the two conflicting armies, about to join battle, on which they move backwards and forwards, press and are pressed, pursue and fly.

Page 232, line 19.

*On either eyelid, dropping light,
The dew of Morning sits.*

“By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the Morning.”

Job xli. 18.

Page 234, line 8.

*Or insect polities ; well-ordered states,
Which swarm the hills and valleys of a leaf.*

“It has been well observed, that about the same time when the invention of the telescope shewed us there might be myriads of other worlds claiming the Creator's care, the invention of the microscope proved to us that there were in our own world myriads of creatures, before unknown, which this care was preserving.” “It appeared that in the leaf and in the bud, in solids and in fluids, animals existed, hitherto unsuspected ; the apparently dead masses and blank spaces of the world were found to swarm with life.”

WHEWELL'S *Bridgewater Treatise*.

Page 234, line 22.

For now I know that my Redeemer lives.

This passage from Job has been said by some to be the only one in the Hebrew Scriptures indicative of a belief in the resurrection. I think otherwise. We may see traces of this belief throughout, not in the direct assertion of it, but in allusions which are traceable to it, in the customs of the people, and in the

careful burial of their dead.—The doctrine of the Trinity, the three Persons being mentioned together, is nowhere asserted in the Christian Scriptures, excepting in St. Matthew and the First Epistle of St. John ; though this doctrine is the leading article of the Christian churches, the very key-stone of their faith. Thus the doctrines of the resurrection and a glorious immortality may have been the common persuasion of the sons of Abraham, though not expressly stated in their writings.—The great sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees were at issue on this very point ; as the great body of Christendom is at this day at issue with the Unitarians on the doctrine of the blessed Trinity. The book of Job is of an antiquity that baffles speculation ; but the passage I have transcribed is not there recorded as anything directly revealed ; and therefore may have been believed by many before. “ And he said, Son of Man, can these dry bones live ? And I answered, Lord God, thou knowest ; ” was a question which, if now put, under similar circumstances, must be similarly answered.—With what body he is to be raised, no man could possibly, of himself, discover : the identity of the individual would not be lost from any changes in his former tabernacle ; any more than the identity of a youth, who, if he lives thirty or forty years, physiology teaches us, will not have a particle remaining of his original framework, of bones, muscles, membranes, and sense-strings compact. We at last come to the conclusion, that we are “ fearfully and wonderfully made.” I see no reason for believing that the Jews did not hold these comfortable doctrines ; but I see every reason for believing that they did ; and I have no doubt that they had a prospective faith, however much they may have been mistaken as to His person and offices, in the great Deliverer, even as the Christians have a retrospective faith.

The Children of the Dispersion, however, are yet happily looking forward, while Christendom looks backward, only backward—while events foretold by the prophets of old are in the womb of Time, and only just not born. It is written, however,



that the peculiar people shall be again restored to their pleasant lands, and be included in a new covenant ; when all of them shall know Him from the least to the greatest. And what is writ, is writ.

Page 245, line 15.

How pleasant home, when one has been abroad !

" O quid solutis est beatius curis ?
Cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino
Labore fessi venimus larem ad nostrum,
Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto."

CATULLUS.

Page 256, line 21.

My virginity

Bewailing ; since for me that promise is not.

The high and spiritual privileges attached to primogeniture among the Jews ; the pride of their nationality ; their careful exclusion by their lawgiver from fellowship with the rest of mankind, and especially from intermarriages with those who were not of the seed of Jacob ; their impatience for a king, and their sin in renouncing the direct government of the Theocrat when they prayed to him for a viceregal deputy ; their hopes and their ambition ; their schemes and their wishes ; their vows and their prayers ; their religion and their polity—all originated in and pointed to that particular promise, [which was to be fulfilled in the person of the Desire of women. In the earlier times this hope was naturally shared alike by all the tribes, and continued to be cherished by all even after it was expressly declared that the tribe of Judah was selected for this especial honour.

Page 263, line 7.

A holocaust for Israel.

" So Virtue, given for lost,
Deprest and overthrown, as seem'd
Like that self-begotten bird
In the Arabian woods embost,
That no second knows nor third,
And lay erewhile a holocaust,
From out her ashy womb, now teem'd,
Revives, refflourishes, then vigorous most
When'most unactive deem'd;
And though her body die, her fame survives,
A secular bird, ages of lives."

Samson Agonistes.

ESTHER.



The Persons.

AHASUERUS, *the King of Persia.* .

ESTHER, *his Queen.*

HAMAN, *his Prime Minister.*

ORONTES, *an Officer of the Palace.*

HORBONAH, *one of the King's Chamberlains.*

HATACH, *one of the Queen's Chamberlains.*

ZERESH, *the Wife of Haman.*

MORDECAI, *one of the Waiters at the King's Gate.*

HEBER, *a Jew.*

CHORUS OF JEWISH GIRLS.

Scene—Shushan Palace.



ESTHER.

Before the Palace.

MORDECAI AND HEBER.

HEBER.

DREADFUL to tell, and horrible to hear ! .
How horrible ! What all ? All at a blow ?
Have lots been cast for us ? Shall Amalek
With indiscriminate slaughter cut us off ?
Old men and young, women and dove-eyed maids,
Children and infants and the yet unborn ?
Without a country, captives and dispersed,
Like sheep without a shepherd—bought and sold !
To suffocate our nation in the pit,
From which is no redemption ! Whence this hate
That grudges sunshine and the light of life
To what remains of Israel ? Can it be
In heart of man to do this wickedness ?

MORDECAI.


This Haman hates us for he hates our God ;
Me most of all, because I never bowed
Before him, and have constantly refused
Low homage to his lofty mightiness.

HEBER.

Yet since it is the custom of the land,
And by thine office thou art bound to pay it,
And hast to others—why refuse it him ?

MORDECAI.

It was not that I deemed such reverence
Idolatrous observance ; with clear soul
I still have paid it to the Persian lords ;
Nor had denied it Haman, but I knew
This same high-swoln preposterous Insolence,
Within these halls a fawning sycophant,
Without them an oppressor to the height,
To be the viperous spawn of Amalek.
He knew me for a Jew : his towering rage
Then sank into the deadly calm of hate.
One life—a hundred—nor a thousand lives,
Nor less than all could satisfy his wrath.
Hence grew his fiendish plot ; having his ear,



He works upon the Monarch's jealousy,
And whispers him of organized revolts,
Of secret meetings, worst conspiracies,
And makes us still the ringleaders of all—
The wildest front of danger to the throne.
The great king, thereupon, as sadly taught,
Some few years past, what the mad devilry
Of desperate Rebellion puts in act,
Not cruel else, was moved by his discourse,
And gave us up unto this Agagite,
To cut us off as irreclaimable,
A gangrene to the body politic.

HEBER.

By thy submission to his pride of place
We had escaped this danger—

MORDECAI.

Shall I do

Evil that good may come? Bless that accurst,
And kiss the dust before proud Amalek?
Our fathers were commanded to destroy
The dukes of Edom—this especially.
We scotched but did not kill the writhing snake,
And now his fatal coil is wrapt around us,
And threatens our being: 'tis a controversy


Between our One God and this infidel.
God by Himself hath sworn that Israel's seed
Shall live before him ; Amalek hath sworn
That Israel's seed shall perish, one and all.
Execrable ! Irreconcilable !
He chuckles in his heart that now our neck,
As of one man, is ready for his knife.
The eagle and the dove may dwell within
One aërie ; in one stall together couch
The lion and the lamb ; in harmony
The most discordant opposites embrace ;
But we can have no peace with Amalek.

HEBER.

But, hating thee, how has he so long brooked
Thy presence, when his power so easily
Had swept the nuisance from his sight and path ?

MORDECAI.

Partly, to please his swelling vanity,
He means all Israel for one feast of death ;
And partly as I am an officer,
Although a mean one, of the royal house,
He may not, without leave obtained, remove me.
To stir in this might on himself recoil,
By bringing his bad practices to light—



But lo ! the vulture with his sullen van,
That sails impatient by the dying wretch,
And, hungered, waits his dead—lo ! Haman comes !

[HAMAN comes from the Palace, and passes
slowly by, scowling on MORDECAI.]

HEBER.

He came, frowned, and is gone. Had evil eye
The power of blasting, Mordecai were dead.
His cold smile in its bitterness exprest
The fierce Destroyer, when his murdered man
Lies at his foot, and he looks down, content,
Upon his handiwork and smiles on it.

MORDECAI.

So let him pass ; for evil suffers more
Than it inflicts, and still its venom'd shaft,
Missing the mark, is on itself returned.
And this proud-stepping fool, in whose conceit
The pavement is not worthy of his tread,
Earth of his greatness, nor the royal court
Of his attendance ; blaming unjust fate,
Or the blind stars, whose envy or neglect
Gave not to him, sole worthy of the world,
The sceptre and imperial diadem,
Is of all men most wretched ; for to reach

Too high is to insure a heavy fall.
Too near the thunder-cloud too near the bolt ;
Others have found it—he may in his turn.

HEBER.

But ere he fall, his eyes will look upon
Our nation's ruin, and his ears will drink
The music of our death-groans. Nor is this
A massacre—a wholesale butchery
Of dangerous lives, but sparing feebleness ;
Our race must not remain—so runs the writ ;
And there are wolfish executioners,
Traders in blood and soul-seared deputies
To see it done ; a counsellor of Fear
To goad them on ; a busy fiend to press
The summary proceeding to its end.
When the snared bird wins pity from the fowler,
Or from the lean and nursing lioness
The doe, that, startled at the hunter's horn,
Has darted unawares into her lair—
The Jew may find the Gentile merciful.
Yet from the darkness hanging on thy brow,
There steals a growing light, as of the dawn ;
Thine eyes are lively, and their natural hue
Rests on thy cheek and lips ; which would not be,
Except there was a lightening up of Hope

Within the stronghold, where thy constant soul
Collects its forces, and, re-centred, stands
On its defence against the world without.

MORDECAI.

A royal edict may not be repealed ;
The sceptred despot, in his height of power,
What he has once decreed cannot rescind.
I have a hope ; and never will despair
Till that hope ends with life. It not consists
With prophecy, nor God's sure promises,
That Israel should be cut off from the nations.


HEBER.

But for this golden hope, what warranty
Can we produce ? Did we not break the seals,
And trample in the dust the Covenant,
And thus both for ourselves and heirs renounce
The precious contract and its benefits ?
When we found careless Sleep in safety's lap,
We mocked at Him, whose shield was over us.
Beneath the secure shadow of our vines,
We thought not of the Giver. Ashtaroth,
And Baäl had their eager worshippers ;
Women and men, in wanton groves, observed
The rites of Syrian Thammuz ; altars flamed

With incense to false gods; and fathers made
Their seed to pass through fire to horrid Moloch.
Yea! Was there not an idol-image set
In God's own house? Cast forth and reprobate—
For us what else but black despair remains?

MORDECAI.

God makes man's wrath to praise Him evermore.
Who else but He from the dark pit upraised
Joseph to princely glory? From the waves
Rescued that helpless infant, who became
The Leader and the Judge and Lawgiver?
Young David from the lion and the bear,
And from that pestilent and frightful beast,
Philistia's giant Terror? From the rage
Of Pharaoh saved the people, and up-piled
On either side the waters of the sea,
Making a lane of safety for their flight—
Prodigious walls! That with their ruinous flood
Fell and ingulfed proud Pharaoh, host and all—
Who else but God? This danger not exceeds
That threatened doom; however it may end,
I hope and trust a root of us shall live
To quicken and put forth hereafter shoots.



HEBER.

But is there instrument or minister,
In any way marked out, whom, as it seems,
The subtle flame of His intelligence
Will energise, whether to prophesy,
Or counsel, or to do wonders and signs,
As Moses before Pharaoh ?

MORDECAI.

To my thought,
And expectation there is such an one.
Within those stately walls there blooms a flower,
That from the bud I cherished carefully,
And for her natural sweetness dearly prized :
She graces now the bosom of the king ;
Touched by her beauty and her modest grace,
Her wisdom and her inborn royalty,
He values her beyond his counsellors,
His fluttering minions and his men of war,
His cunning Magians with their ritual,
And all the tricks of their philosophy,
More than his sceptre—almost as himself.
My kinswoman Hadassah is the Queen,
Called Esther by the Persian : nor, enthroned,

Her lineage and her country yet unknown,
Has she forgotten Israel or her race.

HEBER.

This wonder is like those of happier times,
When God shewed signs. How came she to the throne?

MORDECAI.


After his wars, his empery secured,
For half a year the king kept festival.
This done, for seven days more he entertained
The ring of nobles in his garden-court,
And shewed the honour of his majesty.
At the same time, within the royal house,
Queen Vashti entertained the noble ring
Of beauties; thus, in princely privacy,
She shewed the honour of her modesty.

HEBER.

It is a goodly custom thus to guard
The delicacy, which once breathed upon
By the warm lips of heated revellers,
Fades like the freshness of a lip-blown rose.

MORDECAI.

Upon the last day of the feast, the king,



Proud of her beauty and with wine bedewed,
Would shew his company her loveliness.
To this end summoned, Vashti would not go ;
And she was put away, that, through his realm,
Women should not, by her example taught,
Despise their husbands.

HEBER.

Thus her modesty,
Which was her excellence, became her loss.

MORDECAI.

Not so. The wrong she did Authority,
Was greater than that done her modesty.
But higher Agency was now at work ;
That Queen, by forfeiture, made room for this.

HEBER.

How gained Hadassah what Queen Vashti lost ?

MORDECAI.

The king remembered Vashti and he grieved.
His servants, marking his uneasiness,
Advised that proclamation should be made,
And all the fairest virgins be looked out,
Through the wide circuit of his provinces,

And be assembled here, to wait upon
The great king's pleasure and deliberate choice.
So was it done; and Earth's most beautiful
Were here collected—Esther one of them.
In brief the Monarch saw her; saw and loved;
And set the royal crown upon her head.
From her first infancy, she ever found
Favour with all beholders; for to me,
An orphan left, she was as my own child;
A shape of joy; a spirit of harmony
Breathing new life into my blighted heart,
Herself the soft green in my wilderness.
A comfort, consolation, and a hope.
None without loving ever looked on her;
And, in the women's house, the Chamberlain
Above all favoured her. The great king loves her;
And I do think that the Divinity
She worships ever, ever favours her.
Hence grows my hope that she has been advanced
For some great purpose—but in this extreme
The Highest only can deliver us,
Turn Agag's wisdom into foolishness,
And in his own snare take the cruel one.

HEBER.

Wilt thou then see her, and persuade her tell

Her lineage and her nation to the king,
If so some remedy may be devised?

MORDECAI.

For this end stand I here disfigured thus,
With ashes on my head, in sackcloth clad;
Within the gates, in this unseemly garb,
I may not pass; but soon her chamberlains,
Or maidens will perceive me—or shall hear
Such dismal cries as suit the woful voice,
Announcing national ruin. Leave me now,
And comfort our afflicted—if their woe
Will hear of comfort from uncertain hopes,
While over them a certain death impends,
So far as man's weak wisdom can forecast.
Tell them to build their hope upon the Rock
Of Ages; for man's help is vanity.

[*Exeunt.*

The Queen's Apartments.


CHORUS.

Spirit of the Past! Why art thou still unsealing
The story of our fathers, to the slave—
The Hebrew slave of gentile lord, revealing
The might of freemen, glory of the brave?

Tabor ! From whose lordly heel
Stretches far and wide Jezreel,
With her corn-fields waving free,
Like the laughter of the sea ;
Sweet Lake, that smilest on the lowly Jair !
 Ye happy Herds that near your Arnon stray ;
Ye Goats of Gilead with your pomp of hair ;
 Ye Vines of Eglon, Palms of Aior-hai ;

Bright-rolling Jordan ! City of delight !
 Home of the heart we never looked upon !
High-climbing cedars, pleasant to the sight—
 Immortal memories of Lebanon !
Hyssop growing on the wall—
Shady fig-tree, lily tall—
Peeping bud and opening flower—
Fountain with the healing power ;
And all ye blessed creatures of the spring,
 Who live in Jewry and in Jewry die—
Ye have our Air—for us no seasons bring
 The bloom of life—our own love-looking sky.

Oh ! that I were again a child,
 Reposing on my mother's love ;
Or that I could fly o'er the wild,
 Like the home-returning dove !



Sloping hill and lofty mountain—
River, brook, and bubbling fountain—
Holy spots, with storied names—
Forfeit of our sins and shames,
Blessed Canaan! When shall we,
 Hopeless outcasts! Heartless slaves!
Led to God, recover thee—
 Fields and vineyards, homes and graves?

Hadassah reigns! Our own Hadassah sleeps
 In Shushan's palace by the Monarch's side;
Her Hebrew heart the Hebrew woman keeps,
 Nor scorns her people, though the Persian's bride.
Sweet and lovely palace-flower!
Often in her royal bower
With a sigh the Queen remembers
Sion rising from her embers;
And oft, in sleep, the temple and the throne,
 And Judah's glories flash upon her mind;
Then, sad reverse! In Babylon is shewn
 The last of Judah's kings in chains and blind!

The Assyrian wolf, who trampled on the fold,
 And rent our flock, himself has since been torn;
Nor mightiest battlements; nor wealth untold;
 Nor purple Power by priestly craft upborne;


Nor the stars by sages read ;
Nor their Bel's lascivious bed ;
Nor the promise of the skies ;
Nor the wisdom of the wise
Could save Belshazzar in his hour of fate.

What safety found he in his glittering halls ?
The appointed conqueror thunders at the gate—
Death stalks before him, and Assyria falls.

The wicked for a time may spread
The branches of his swelling pride ;
But the green honours of his head,
When the fiery arrows glide
From the red Wrath in the sky,
Shrivel at their touch and die.
Faint are echoes of renown—
Thrones and empires topple down—
But undying Virtue blooms.

When in outer night they grope,
Faith, their inner light, relumes
For the prisoners of Hope.

Hadassah reigns ! But not by pomp allured,
She weeps in secret for her people's woes—
For them who, scattered far, are yet immured,
Like some poor prey the hunter's nets inclose.



Her the mighty king caressing,
Owns his life's completest blessing;
Abstract rare of woman's beauty,
Spotless faith and chaste-eyed duty,
The Queen is wife! Affection softens state—
A true heart beats beneath the royal zone;
On her the monarch's fondest wishes wait,
And Judah's flower gives sweetness to his throne.

Unhappy Vashti! Fall'n from pride of place—
The royal chamber and the queenly lot;
No more the smile of triumph lights thy face;
Thy beauty withers, by the king forgot.
Now thy place a better fills;
Thus the mighty Master wills,
Who, within His close pavilion,
Gives or takes away dominion;
Who sits upon the round of boundless Space,
Self-centred, and, on all His worlds intent,
Marks every pulse of Time and point of Place,
And moves, unseen, the wheels of Government.

The King of kings will work His will;
The hearts of men are in His hand;
Whate'er they think, He sways them still,
Bowing them to His command.

Persia's lord may please His eye
With his Esther's royalty ;
But, perchance, 'twas God's design,
To restore His chosen line ;
And to give us back our name—
 Making Salem as a bride,
Free from spot and taint of shame,
 For her husband purified.

But here our royal mistress comes ! Our joy—
Our feshet in the midst of bitter waters,
Dear to our sight, as to the traveller,
Whose burning eyes for hours have only seen
A weary continuity of sand,
The welcome shade of date-trees, and the gush
Of limpid freshness gurgling at his feet.
Queen, live for ever !

ESTHER.

Be it truly so !

As customary homage to my state
I like it not, and least in privacy.
A Hebrew woman mid her Hebrew maids,
Disrobed of ceremonious royalty,
I would enjoy my freedom ; from your lips
I wish to hear the accents of the free.

Bound by community of blood and hopes,
Derived to us from father Abraham,
Ye are my friends, and sisters—not my slaves.
The forehead lowly bowed unto the ground—
High terms of fawning adulation—
The hollow worship of the heartless crowd—
The diamond zone—the sparkling carcanet—
The golden round, fatiguing to the brow—
Are things I must submit to, nor disdain,
Since they are shows belonging to my place.
But from my loved companions, here at least,
Let me receive the language of the heart.

CHORUS.

We but for thee had dwelt with poverty,
Dimmed in our spring of life, perchance defiled;
For orphan youth, not bred up at the knee
Of kind Authority, thrown on itself,
Unknowing in the world and its bad ways,
From Virtue's highway easily declines
Into the by-paths to the house of Sin.
We have no way to flatter, but our love;
In all heart-honesty we speak to thee;
In all the faith thy nobleness exacts,
We pay thee service; and while we respect
The throne's best ornament, we love indeed

The friend who saved us out of Babylon—
The lover of her country and her kin.

ESTHER.

'Tis well ; the Queen has never yet forgot
That she is woman ; and my woman's heart,
Though it has room for sympathy with all
Who are in trouble—with peculiar love
Warms towards Israel.

CHORUS.

Mistress of our hearts !
May we then ask why Persia's Queen conceals
Her lineage, when her very name would quench
The insolence of those, whose heels insult
The down-trod neck of our captivity ?

ESTHER.

Ahasuerus never questioned me,
Nor others, whence I came. His majesty
Raised, without derogation to itself,
My lowness to his bosom ; in his eyes

(Since from mine infant orphanship he was,
Though not in kind, my father in his care),
Advised me still to keep my race unknown.
Hatach, the Chamberlain, from him at first,
Ye, late from me, have learned this well-kept secret.
What piercing cry was that, distant yet shrill?
Again and yet again that cry! Who knocks?

CHORUS.

'Tis Hatach; in his visage extreme grief,
And he is breathless from his urgent haste.

ESTHER.

Admit him!—My prophetic soul! Speak, Hatach!
What sudden evil threatens Mordecai?
His, my heart tells me, are those painful cries,
Which yet are ringing in my startled ears.

HATACH.

In sackcloth and with ashes on his head,
He keeps the gate, uttering those dismal sounds:
Nor will he change for a more fitting garb
His sad habiliments; with grief intense
And mingled indignation, he desired
Thy servant with all speed to tell the Queen——

ESTHER.

Proceed ! Speak as to one prepared to hear.
Nay, man ! Speak out ; play not with my suspense.
The worst !—Out with it, sir ! Go on !—Go on !

HATACH.

It is so full of danger——

ESTHER.

What of danger ?

Go where we will, it ever is about us.
The king beneath his purple canopy ;
The merry slave that whistles as he works ;
The prey and the preyer ; all things that live
Must also die ; danger environs all.
Speak out, and say what plague has come to Susa ;
All ills are worse in fear than sufferance.

HATACH.

The great king hath decreed that, in one day,
Throughout his satrapies, his twenty-seven
And hundred provinces, the Jewish race
Be blotted out, and perish root and branch ;
Woman and man ; youth, old age, infancy,
And the small life not yet to day disclosed.

ESTHER.

311

ESTHER.

My heart is chilled. Oh, worse than any fear!
The general darkness is returned again;
The waters overtop us, and we sink;
The world's eye is put out; cold, very cold!
God! God! And has it come at last to this?
Well, sir, and what says Mordecai to me?

HATACH.

He bade me say that Haman did obtain
This royal edict; and he charges thee
To stand before the king, and make request
Now for thy people.

ESTHER.

Ha! Before the king?

Is not the king a man, and therefore touched
By sense of mortal woes? And is he not
Sworn counsellor of Mercy by his office?
Has he not felt what 'tis to suffer pain,
Ache of the body, or some touch of grief?
Impossible! He cannot, dare not kill
A nation like a moth or silly fly!

HATACH.

Here is a copy of the stern decree.

ESTHER.

Read—read it, syllable by syllable.

HATACH.

The great king to his lords and satrapies,
The rulers of his states and provinces,
Says thus; “Destroy and kill, and cause to perish,
All Jews, both young and old, woman and man,
And little children, all on the same day,
Upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month,
And for a booty take the spoil of them.
Do this, and live.”

ESTHER.

Return to Mordecai.

Thus says the Queen; All the king's servants know
That whosoever pass, uncalled by him,
Into the inner court unto the king,
Shall surely die, except he stretches forth
The golden sceptre, and so gives them life.
But I have not been called unto the king
These thirty days. Depart, tell him, return!

[*Exit* HATACH.]

Forewarned, they say, forearmed; but in this strait,
Where at each hoped-for outlet, every turn,

A frowning death,—remorseless Opposite!—
Stands, and infuriate waves his bickering blade,
I see no refuge. Like the shackled ox,
Led to the shambles, must my people bow
Their necks to slaughter? All to perish?—All?
Lost! Lost! Lost without hope!—Remediless!

CHORUS.

Root and branch, and shoot and stem,
Woe for thee, Jerusalem!
Who can bear to think or tell
What awaits our Israël?
Could the thought of man conceive—
Can a woman's heart believe,
That a nation, at a blow,
Should be made to perish so?
By the tears upon thy cheek,
Queen, so beautiful and meek!
By the grief that, like a dart,
Pierces now thy tender heart;
By the living, who shall lie,
When the tenth moon passeth by,
Carcases, each lovely cheek
Rudely torn by vulture-beak;
By thy love for us and all,
Who upon Jehovah call;

By Religion's holy power
On thy heart and in this hour,
When the foeman whets his knife,
Thirsting for thy people's life ;
Haste, and speak, and stand between
Us and death, most royal Queen !

ESTHER.

All is not lost that seems so ; when at worst,
He often hath retrieved us. Merciful,
And beyond thought of man long-suffering,
He shapes His judgments to best issues still.
The seed of promise must not be extinct ;
Our adversary is that Amalek
God cursed ; our people Isaac, whom He blessed.
The trouble of my soul has past away ;
And looking upward to the King of kings,
The ever-living Judge, at whose high throne,
Assessor to His justice, Mercy sits,
I put away all fears of Violence,
And with a free soul will abide th' event.
Weak woman, heretofore, has been employed
As instrument in Israel's time of need,
As ruler, prophetess, or heroine ;
And it may be that I, in this distress,
Have found much favour in the sight of God.

Be of good cheer, daughters of Abraham !
It may not be that impious Amalek
Shall tread down Israel into shapeless dust.

CHORUS.

Thy comfortable words give us new life ;
They fall upon our ears like the soft dew
Upon a faint and drooping lily-stalk,
That, so refreshed, raises its glistening head,
And blooms anew ; but Hatach has returned.

ESTHER.

What counsel now from pious Mordecai ?

HATACH.

Thus answers Mordecai : " Think not, oh Queen !
That in the king's house thou shalt safer be,
And only one of all the Jews escape.
If thou dost altogether hold thy peace,
At this time, from another place shall come
A respite and deliverance for the Jews ;
But all thy father's house shall be destroyed,
Thou with it ; and who knows but Providence
Advanced thee to the kingdom for this end,
To save thy people at this very time ! "

ESTHER.

From me this answer; "Gather all the Jews
That are in Shushan; keep a fast for me,
For three days eat not, drink not, day or night;
My maidens and myself will likewise fast,
And so will I go in unto the king,
And if I perish—even so—I perish."

[*Exit* HATACH.]

But thou Invisible! Sole Autocrat!
True King, Whose Word is Power; Whose Providence
Unerring; Government effectual;
To Whom no creature says—"What doest Thou?"
Whose plans proceed in clouds of mystery,
Whose name is Wonder, title Merciful!
By Whom kings reign; princes and counsellors,
Rulers and judges, each in his degree;
Who art from everlasting; without end,
Without beginning; Who didst build the heavens;
And set a compass on the depth; and fix
The firmament; and give the sea his bounds;
And earth's foundations settle and appoint,
Island or continent; Thou Uncontained,
Almighty, Omnipresent, All-pervading,
All-knowing, Unimaginable God!

Give me to find that wisdom, which is life,
The favour of the Lord: And what am I?
But let the Lord have mercy, and accept
My very humbleness, and put away
This judgment from the people. We have sinned;
But Thou art merciful; and who but Thou
Can save us, Strength of Israel! Who but Thou?
Put forth Thy power, oh Lord! and magnify
Thy glory in our great deliverance,
God of Salvation! For the Lord hath said—
“Offer to God thanksgiving, call on Me
In trouble, and I will deliver you.”
We call on Thee; hear and deliver us
In this our trouble for Thy great Name's sake.

CHORUS.

Now silent is the prophet's voice,
And quenched the heaven-descended fire!
Nor hapless Judah may rejoice
In choral song and sacred lyre.
The minstrel and his harp are mute,
And mirth is fled, and hushed the lute;
For tears and sobbings only suit
Our days of darkness and of shame,
Our captive state, our ruined name.

Dear land of my fathers ; which only
Smiles on me in dreams of the night ;
Fair Palestine ! Lovely and lonely !
Shall mine eyes ever see their delight ?
Shall my hand ever gather the roses
That bud on the bosom of Sharon ?
Oh where in this Egypt is Moses ?
And where in this desert is Aaron ?
And where is the Captain to save us
From those, who subdued and enslave us ?

Our bitter cup o'erflows the brim ;—
For God beheld the hideous rites
Of Ashtaroth and Baälim ;
And thus His wrath our guilt requites.
Could He forbear the heavy hand,
When Judah shamed the holy land,
Defiance bade to his command,
And left His temple for the groves
Of heathen gods and wanton loves ?

The Assyrian worried the land ;
The blood of the priesthood was spilt ;
The temple was burnt with the brand—
The temple that Solomon built,

Can purple and gold make amends
For country and lovers and friends ?
Is Susa like Sion to me ?
Sweet Jordan ! What river like thee ?
Dear Hebron ! What dew is like thine ?
What country, ye Nations ! like mine ?

Away ! The mad destroyer glares !
The hour is come and flight is vain !
The Virgin breast the Ruffian bares ;—
Defiles and slays and shames the slain.
Behold ! The wretch, with gloating eye,
Pauses to see his victim die,
And leans to catch the latest sigh,
The gurgle of the passing breath,
That struggles in the jaw of death.

O God ! Shall this slaughter be made ?
Shall Amalek mock at Thy power ?
Shall Edom, in purple arrayed,
The life-blood of Judah devour ?
Will that Angel not come to the field
With his shout, and his sword, and his shield ?
Shall the blade of blasphemer prevail ?
Shall the stock of Thine Abraham fail ?

Never more shall the light of Thy face
Be shewn to the forfeited race?

Our land was pleasant once to Him,
The Just, the Merciful, and Good,
Whose cloud, between the Cherubim,
Upon the Ark of Promise stood;
And while that cloud of Glory shone,
Israel was never left alone;
Jehovah still was with His own;
But captives of the bow and spear,
We now are sold to slaughter here.

O Lord! In the Valley of Vision
The Seer of the future foresaw,
That Judah should be a derision
To the heathen who mock at Thy law.
He looked on the heaps of the slain—
The scattered who ne'er came again;
He saw them the scorn of their kind,—
But still there was comfort behind;
From the stock, that the Gentiles despise,
He saw the Restorer arise.

Gird on thy sword, thou Mighty One!
The ravenous beast is in our path—

He thinks that Jacob's race is run,
 And in the madness of his wrath,
 He now defies the living God !
 We feel our sin—we kiss the rod ;
 Our Judah now is Ichabod ;
 We have no strength to fight or fly—
 Lord ! Must the Seed of Promise die ?

Oh ! far be this purpose from thee !
 Shall the conquering Edomite tell
 How his axe was applied to the tree,
 And the glory of Lebanon fell ?
 How the life-blood of Isaac was gone,
 While the God of his father looked on,
 And would not or could not defend
 That oath, which He sware to His friend ?
 Come down, in the cloud of Thy might,
 With Thy buckler and sword to the fight.

The Presence-Chamber. The King on his Throne, surrounded by his Counsellors.

AHASUERUS.

Since we have found such dangerous plots are hatched
 Throughout our provinces, and much we owe
 To Haman's care for their discovery,

We must take better order for our realm.
Our deputies must be of approved faith,
And loyalty ; not such whose tyranny
May goad the patient subject to revolt,
Nor those whose ignorance in government
May tempt the practices of evil men
To work upon the infirm multitude.
I would avoid that worst necessity
Of bloody Execution, when stern Justice,
That often is best Mercy, amputates
A member of the body politic,
To save the whole ; as now we have decreed
Touching the Jews, those desperate revolvers,
Ever unquiet ; who, dissettled, scorn
Best for themselves, nor will allow it others ;
Who, scattered through mine empire, which extends
From where men cannot live from extreme heat
To where they cannot live from extreme cold,
Have sown rebellion with a profuse hand,
And for themselves reaped death.—What insolence
Disturbs the King in council ! Ho ! My guards !
Look to the gates—Forbear ! It is the Queen.

[ESTHER enters and advances to the throne ;
the King holds out his sceptre to her, which
she touches.

What means Queen Esther? With this golden rod
I bid thee welcome, and assure thy safety
From the strict law, which thou, not knowing it,
Hast broken now.

ESTHER.

May the king live for ever!
As is my heart's desire the king should live.
I knew, and knowing it did now incur
The hazard of the law, not without hope
Of my lord's clemency.

AHASUERUS.

What wills Queen Esther?
And what is thy request? 'Tis granted thee,
Although it be the gift of half my kingdom.

ESTHER.

If so it shall seem good unto the king,
And I have now found favour in his eyes,
I pray my lord that he and Haman come
Unto the feast I have prepared for him.

AHASUERUS.

Some one tell Haman of the queen's command,
And bid him haste. Dear Esther! Now the king

Puts off the weight of stiff Authority,
And, from his state descending, looks upon
Thy royal beauty with a lover's eye.
Calm is thy brow, and to the glittering crown,
Its proper ornament, lends majesty ;
Those glorious orbs scatter a serene light,
Arrowed with winged thoughts, which Wisdom aims
From those imperial lids ; and thine own smile
Lends newer freshness to the exquisite lips,
Arched, as the Grecians say, like Cupid's bow.
But yet methinks thy cheek is somewhat pale,
And I did hear the sigh that seemed to be
Welcome relief, as to suspended breath,
Before thy soft voice let its music fall
Upon mine ear. Hast thou some secret grief,
Or do I only fancy that thou hast ?

ESTHER.

It was not very safe to dare that danger
Thy sceptre saved me from ; and though I dared
With hope of favour, yet there was a fear
Of thy displeasure.

AHASUERUS.

What ! With thee ? My Comfort !
Light of mine eyes ! Displeasure's not for thee.

But, for I know thee wise and dutiful,
Have found thee ever prudent, nor disposed
To press beyond, but more to keep within
Thy proper sphere, only some weighty cause
Has brought thee hither. Fairest! What is it?

ESTHER.

I have not seen the king for many days;
And I must needs be glad to sun myself
In my lord's eyes; and yet it was not that.
I not deny I have a boon to ask,
A precious boon, but, with thy gracious leave,
At more convenient time.

AHASUERUS.

I will not press it;
Yet am I somewhat curious to know
The boon which Esther hesitates to ask;
For am I not thy lord, in strictest love,
Thy very brother? What can Esther ask
Ahasuerus would not joy to grant?
That pleading smile! Well, I will answer it
At thy convenient time. Now to the banquet!

[*Exeunt.*

Ante-room. HAMAN and ORONTES.

ORONTES.

Exalted Haman has but to command
His servant to obey. When the king calls,
I'll find or make an opportunity
To mention you. But why so soon abroad,
The day so young? And whence this eagerness
To see the monarch without loss of time?

HAMAN.

I thought the tedious night would never end ;
For I outwatched the stars, and gazed into
The deep convexity often and long,
Impatient for the lines of ruddy light
Made by day's rod upon the fleckered grey :
Sleep was not in mine eyes, nor in my heart.
I thought upon my glories, and I planned
Schemes for the future : then, I know not how,
Methought I stood beneath the Thracian sky,
And ran upon the hills, tracking the deer,
While my Molossian hound bayed at my heels,
A thoughtless boy ! My father and my mother
Next rose before me ; and I passed within
The homely homestead where I saw the light.

There in her cradle lay mine infant sister,
And she did smile upon me in her sleep.
As in the rapid changes of a dream,
The various scenes and persons which my youth
Was once familiar with passed in review :
And things that were not—bodiless presentments
Of life-like shews, begot by ecstasy
On incorporeal air—came with the throng
Of moving memories. The shifting scene
Now was a pastoral vale of Thessaly,
Done to the life, with shepherds and their flocks ;
And now a tangled Thracian forestry,
With horns and hounds and shouts rebellowing ;
Till once again it was (the latest time)
My childhood's home—as on the day I left,
All for ambition ; and methought I saw,
Which then I saw not, towering up above
A lordly eagle on his plumes of pride,
Up! Up! Till he was almost lost i' the clouds.
Then suddenly around me flew a troop
Of scared and scattered doves, and with sheer wing
Down darted the fierce bird, as to devour
Those innocents, and I did pity them,
And would have driven away the feathered tyrant ;
But as he was in act to pounce upon
A crested one, an arrow from a cloud,

Argent with flashes of a vivid light,
Struck him ; and there was only left of him
A little dust. 'Twas a strange phantasy,
A trick o' the mind, yet was I broad awake.
I would have wept, but could not, as I thought
Of bygone times, when careless Haman was
Much happier as a child in chilly Thrace,
Than as the first of Persia's turbaned slaves.

ORONTES.

The troubled vision from a troubled mind
Still comes ; for melancholy is the stuff
That dreams and dreamlike fancies all are made of.
But whence, great Haman, came this sadness o'er
Thy heavy spirit ? On the topmost steep
Of fortune thou hast fixed thyself, secure
By thine own prudence and our master's love.

HAMAN.

Thanks for his love. I have been useful to him,
And—to myself. With right good will I clomb
To greatness, and I trust my policy
Will keep me safe, nor suffer unchaste Fortune,
Although she bare her bosom to my view,
To tempt me onward to a dizzier height.
I think the great king will accord my boon.

There is a toad that squats upon my path,
And I would have the reptile swept away.

ORONTES.

What enemy ? Who dares oppose himself
To Haman's power ? What potentate or prince ?

HAMAN.

Thou knowest all my power, my riches, state ;
How I am next unto the king himself,
Above all other lords ; how from my trunk
Ten goodly branches their fresh honours spread.
Brave boys ! who shall extend their father's fame,
And keep my stock and memory alive,
By due transmission, to the latest time.
And yesterday, no subject but myself
Admitted to that grace, I and the king
Were at Queen Esther's banquet ; and to-day
Again we banquet with her. Is a prince
So high in place, so favoured, to be scorned
By that Jew dog, unsightly Mordecai ?

ORONTES.

The man who keeps the king's gate ? How could he
Offend thy greatness ? 'Twere all one a gnat
Should cross the river-horse, and think to drive him,

When he's a hungered, from the pleasant field
That tempts him from his Nile. Too mean to hurt,
And I should think to sting, his sauciness
To Persia's first grandee were a good jest,
But that I see great Haman thinks it none.

HAMAN.

All do me homage—save this Mordecai ;
All hail my coming—all but Mordecai ;
All tremble at my power—but Mordecai ;
All dread mine angry frown, and covet my smile,
But only this perverse rude Mordecai.
When I or leave or enter in the palace,
I must behold him ever at the gate,
An eye-sore, and offence, and loathsomeness.
When I went forth well pleased with yester feast,
There still his unrelenting eye met mine,
And, by my father's head ! he smiled in scorn
As I swept by him. Comfortable sleep,
Nor peace, nor any pleasure, nor delight
In riches, nor in power, nor choice of friends,
Nor in my goodly sons, nor in the wife
Who bore them, have I, while this miscreant Jew,
Most hateful of his hated race, neglects me.

ORONTES.

I am amazed, my lord, that such an one
Has power to chafe thy wisdom into rage.

HAMAN.

When princes think no scorn to bend themselves,
And mightiest potentates with homage due
Salute my greatness, worshipping in me
The king's right hand, his chiefest counsellor,
The partner of his secret policies,
His eye to see, his arm to execute ;
When the great king himself on Haman leans,
Shall this coarse dog refuse me reverence,
And dare to look upon me as I pass,
And with an unchanged hue confront my glance ?

ORONTES.

But with his people he will perish soon,
By the proscription of his dangerous race ;
Count but his days—what matter his neglect ?

HAMAN.

Days ! Soon ! One hour is too long life for him !
Days ! Not a day ! I hate him, and I grudge him
Each instant of this goodly glorious light.

The bird, that droops his feathers wet with rain,
Is not so fain of his recovered sun
As he, who truly hates, of his revenge.
My life is darkness till his day is quenched.
'Tis not a man's ; it is a nation's feud.
'Tis an old quarrel ; I detest them all.
It has come down to me from olden times,
A sacred obligation, and an oath,
The sole religion of mine inmost heart,
Always to curse and hate, and spare them never !
In him I hate his nation and himself,
Would kill them all, and will—Tut ! They are dead.
But oh ! that every life of every Jew
Was in his own comprised, that he would die,
With their amount of pain, a million deaths
With all their million agonies in one !

ORONTES.

Then it was not from sure intelligence
Of growing plots and wild conspiracies,
Watched and fomented by these scatterlings,
Thou didst advise the king to use their Nation
As the malignant head of these disorders,
And chop it off ?

HAMAN.

Ha, ha ! 'Tis very good—
An infinite jest ! An excellent conceit !
I offered in my simple loyalty,
That the great king's exchequer might sustain
No danger, on the smoking out some swarms
Of busy bees, that with their concealed stings
Were urging on the peaceful denizens
Of all his apiaries to overt war
Upon their sovereign, that myself would pay
From my own treasures an equivalent
For his incomings from their useful toil !
Which offer his munificence refused.
I thank him, but I made it cheerfully.
And good Orontes knows I do not love
To look upon piled bags of yellow Daries ;
Bales of fine linen, and the silken tissues
Spun from the entrails of the delicate worm ;
Rich services of silver and of gold ;
Chased goblets, gems, and flowered tapestries ;
Marbles of all hues ; finest essences ;
The choice of slaves ; wines and rare delicacies ;
And most of all those precious glistening stones,
Which make their own light in the treasury !

ORONTES.

Whence this engrossing hate, that nothing else
Than a whole Nation's entire overthrow,
Complete annihilation, should content
Thine own wrath, and the never-dying curse
Of thy dead fathers hissing in thine ears?

HAMAN.

Fame says that Haman came from Macedon,
And as a Volunteer served faithfully
The former king, and in the doubtful wars
Of the succession did to this good service.
Well—let it pass ; I am now what I am—
Persia's first subject, but a subject still.
My fathers, sir, were kings ; sprung, it is said,
No casual descendants, but true-born,
From the same loins as that accurst Supplanter,
Who, being the younger, but his mother's pet,
Did by her cunning deftly circumvent
His elder brother, father of my race.
He choused him of his birth-right ; let it go :
And of his father's blessing—pass that too ;
And of his heirship. Yet our story runs
That injured one forgave his injurer.
The round earth, even now not over-stocked

With bipeds, most of whom are good to bow
The knee to such as us, in that far time
Was thinly peopled, and had room enough
For these two brothers from one common sire,
Stamped in one common mould—and one should think
For their posterities. Now list to me.
The world for long went cheerfully with us ;
We had earth's fatness, and the dew came down
With its soft blessing on our fruitful fields ;
Our herds and flocks did give us their increase
Not grudgingly ; we planted us our trees,
And sat beneath their shadows ; and we saw
Our sons and daughters grow in beauty round us.
We sometimes had our wars, and our right hands
Won us the victory ; but suddenly
A new foe came upon us, and prevailed
Oftener than not ; and nothing would suffice
But our annihilation. Mark ! Orontes,
That foe was Israel, and that injured race
Was Amalek ; and I am Amalek.
They said they did so by their God's decree,
Who fought for them and gave us to their hands—
Their God of mercy as they choose to call him !
I care not who 'twas fought for them—not I !
I know that Agag, my great Ancestor,
Was hacked in pieces, and my princely house


Was forced to wander to a foreign land,
And I, to whom all others should bow down,
Confess the virtue that does lie within
The golden round that circles Persia's head.
Hence sprung the zeal and eager loyalty,
That dooms the blood of Israel for manure—
Their carcasses to dogs and unclean birds :
Let their God help them : they are surely snared,
And as they are, so surely shall they die.
But the long tale of days that yet remains
For the sweet nation, is a tedious age
To wait for Mordecai's appointed dance
Upon thin air ; this very day he dies.

ORONTES.

Dost thou not fear lest the great king perceive,
In this revenge against his door-keeper,
The motive for that summary proceeding
He has been taught to think was policy,
And patriot care, and zealous loyalty ?

HAMAN.

This fear already has too long preserved
The hated one ; with wife, and sons, and friends
I sat in council only yester-night.
And I said to them, What doth profit me,



Riches and power, and progeny and friends,
And all for which all Persia envies me,
So long as I behold this Mordecai
Sitting at the king's gate? And they advised
That I should cause a gallows to be made,
And speak unto the king that Mordecai
Be hanged thereon. The lovely tree is set,
Even in my palace-court; there shall he hang;
Ha! Shall he not? My favour with the king
Is at the highest. What shall Haman ask,
And he refuse? I beg him for a dog—
A dog's life. 'Tis my fancy to hang up
The Jew before my door; to see him swing
Will whet my appetite for the Queen's feast.

ORONTES.

Be wise and wary; over-eagerness
May dash thy purpose; for this prince preserves
That awkward habit, which we worthies love not,
Of seeing sometimes when he should not see;
Of using his own eyes, and faculties
Of reason. If he catch thee tripping once,
Away with favour!

HAMAN.

I am self-possessed,
And know his gusty humours; when it suits
To be familiar or to play the slave.
I've sounded the depths and all the shallows
Of his right-royal mind; and have become
Interpreter of his own thoughts to him.
I know my simple word will stand with him
Before all others; therefore, good Orontes!
I trust thy friendship with this secret tale
Thy wisdom will think proper to conceal.
Ha! The door turns; it is the chamberlain.
Horbonah—in good time; how is the king?

HORBONAH.

Indifferent well; but pass into the hall,
And there attend him, as I came to see
Who was in waiting; quickly, for he brooks
Impatiently, this morning, any cross
To any humour.

HAMAN.

I am gone; luck speed me.

[*Exit.*]



HORBONAH.

The latter omen intercept the first,
And turn it into good ! But Haman heeds,
Although a Thracian, good nor evil words,
Nor any sign that intimates the future.
I would not for my beautiful new robe
Of the true colour, and the comfits rare
His lady Zeresh sent me yesterday,
For telling her the gossip of the court,
And secrets only known to chamberlains ;
I would not, by my manhood, with such words
Upon my lips, have gone to conference
With our imperial master, who is brave
And generous as the lion, but, like him,
Doth sometimes shew his dangerous majesty.


ORONTES.

Has the bright beam of day thrown light upon
Ahasuerus merry, or sad, or neither ?
Hath he his folded brow, from under which,
Like light in darkness, gleams his angry glance ;
Or is his front unclouded as the sky,
When Heaven looks cheerful on the jubilant Earth,
Drest in her train and holiday attire,
Green brodered thick with variegated flowers ?

Such is the mood of his clear majesty,
Which is the best and most becomes his state ;
When in his whole behaviour king-like shews
Love for the good, and justice for the wronged,
Scorn for the oppressor, pity for the grieved,
The man and monarch happily conjoined.

HORBONAH.

His humour is but changeable in sooth,
And still it changes with that unseen web
Of inner fancies, which he ravel now,
And now unravels ; leaving us to guess
The colour of the tissue, and his skill
In loosening or else perplexing more
The knots that try his patience, by the clouds
That gather or disperse upon his brow :
Now it is sunshine ; clouded now with storm ;
One while like lower Egypt's balmy sky,
Cloudless and soft, but in its softness sad ;
Another while 'tis like the home of rain,
The many-folded Darkness on the hills,
That ever pours, at his appointed times,
His liquid tribute to the royal Nile.
Thus, by the love of woman, tall Orontes !
I've shewn you how the sky, you asked me of,
Our master's brow, looks on the present day.



ORONTES.

My good bed-keeper of my lord the king,
I owe you thanks; but speak, in soberness,
For your great patron's sake; who parted hence,
Resolved to ask a foeman's life of him
But not to save it;—is he in the vein?

HORBONAH.

In very sadness then the king is sad.
He could not sleep, and passed the tedious night
In listening to the close-writ chronicles
Of his own reign. He would not let me read,
As I did wish, the wonderful exploits
Of the first Persian, who assumed the crown,
Nor of Darius, nor of that mad man
Who wounded Apis and soon died himself:
For he preferred to hear of piping peace;
And so I chanced upon the bloody plot
Of the two chamberlains, Bigthal and Zeresh,
Against his life; but warned by Mordecai,
The traitors lost their heads, and he was saved.
When I read this, he asked what dignity
And honour had been done to Mordecai;
I answered, nothing had been done for him:
And then he said that it was ever so,

Kings must forget, and subjects would not prompt
The royal memory for others' good,
But were right ready ever, at the nonce,
To prick it for another's injury.
This Mordecai was best and faithfullest
Of all his servants, who had saved his life,
And none had spoken any word for him.

ORONTES.

What honour does the king design him now ?

HORBONAH.

That I know not—but something, certainly ;
For still he harped upon this benefit,
And talked of faithfulness and Mordecai,
Till, sooth to say, I wearied of the theme,
And but for his great presence must have yawned.

ORONTES.

I've ever heard that when a Jew begins
To prosper and prevail against his foe,
His is no doubtful fortune, but keeps on
To a full victory. I should not choose
To have this same Jew for mine enemy.

HORBONAH.

Nor I—that is, if the king favours him,
As is most likely ; but we soon shall see.

[*Exeunt.**Royal Chamber. AHASUERUS, attended.*

AHASUERUS.

'Tis ever thus ; our flatterers declare
That we are all but Gods. But yet we feel
The pains and stings of flesh like other men ;
Have the like passions ; grow old ; die like them ;
And for that attribute, in which we most
Resemble Gods, the being merciful
And piteous, and returning good for good ;
How often is it checked by evil weeds,
That clog the waters of the golden fount !
Our memories are mortal, like ourselves,
For benefits received ; immortal only
In their accompt of bygone injuries.
Mine inner sense, called by whatever name,
Conscience, or demon inward to the thought,
Rebukes me now for my disloyalty—
This sad forgetfulness of Mordecai,
Who found the cruel plot against my life,

And through my best Queen made it known to me.
Where is the knave Horbonah. Is no lord
In waiting? If there be, admit him straight.

[Enter HAMAN.

Approach, my faithful Haman, counsellor
And partner of my policy, in whom
Ahasuerus trusts. I know thy zeal,
And would consult thee in a nice affair
Of honour, where the sovereign would confer
The highest glory on the highest worth?
Tell me, what shall be done unto the man
The king delights to honour?

HAMAN (*aside*).

It is me
He means! Whom else? First speak I for myself,
And then to put away that Mordecai.

AHASUERUS.

The king waits Haman's answer.

HAMAN.

Royal master!
I thought how best the king should have it done,

To him he deigns to honour. Be it thus ;
The same apparel which the king doth wear,
And the same horse the king doth ride upon,
And the same crown that decks his royal head ;
With these some foremost prince shall wait on him ;
Array him in the robes ; and set the crown
Upon his head ; and walk before the horse
Whereon he rides, through Susa's crowded streets,
And so proclaim him ; " Thus it shall be done
Unto the man the king delights to honour."

AHASUERUS.

'Tis good. The royal crown, apparel, horse,
Take thou, and do according to thy word
To Mordecai, who sitteth at the gate.

[*Exit.*

HAMAN (*alone*).

Has the king's favour found a scorpion sting ?
Must I do this ? Fool ! Fool ! To glorify
Him that thou hatest ! Ha ! Must Haman play
The serving-man to the Jew Mordecai ?
And careful dress him in the royal robes ?
And place the royal crown upon his head ?
And set his worship on the royal horse ?
And humbly cry before him as he rides,

Behold the man the king delights to honour !
I will not do it—for my life I will not.
But how to shun it ? There is no escape ;
It must be done, and even I must do it.
I dare not leave undone what he commands.
Can he suspect ? What ? I stand safe enough :
What fear I ? Has this reptile wormed himself,
And wriggled into favour with some groom
Of the chamber, some potential purveyor
Of the king's casual ?—No ! Impossible !
I fear I know not what, and yet I fear.
It is not safe to dally with his wrath,
That lowers and flashes, falls, explodes and kills.
It were all one to beard the famished tiger,
Or at the fork-tongued adder thrust your hand,
Or, steel upon your head, to climb the top
Of headland, and provoke the fiery points
Of the red Archers of the thunder-cloud.
This honour must be done, and I must do it—
By Haman done, and done—to Mordecai.

The King's Gate. MORDECAI and HEBER.

HEBER.

Wilt thou again, after this day's bright shew,
Sit at the gate humbly as heretofore ?

MORDECAI.

Mine office is not changed ; nor am I puffed
With that vain honour, though before me went
Haman as herald to the horse and me.

HEBER.

But how the Persians shouted with delight
To see thee honoured ; calling thee by name,
And bowing in the dust, and praying for
Blessings upon thine head !

MORDECAI.

It is enough ;
The applauses of the mob are valueless ;
Their favour is inconstant as the wind ;
Good in itself they know not nor esteem.
Whom now they hail, should any cloud surprise
Of false suspicion, or of sudden threat
From high-throned Power, the miscellaneous herd
Would howl at, and would think it impious
Not to dismember, and to scatter him,
Piecemeal, to every wind ; besides, they love
To see the favourite humbled ; and the lords,
Spoiled in their breeding, too much scorn the people,
As if they were not, like themselves, compact

Of flesh and bones, with the like instruments
For feeling pleasure and for suffering pain ;
And Haman is the proudest of them all.
His forced humility did please them more
Than that unusual honour done to me.

HEBER.

Dost think the king chose Haman for this office
To mortify his high-plumed arrogance ?

MORDECAI.

Whether by accident or by design
The royal choice upon our foeman fell,
I know not ; but I deem that Providence
Now works in our behalf, and this the sign.
This is the very crisis of our fate ;
To-day the noble Queen petitions for us.
How it will be, I cannot even guess.
I have not yet despaired, and now I hope
With trembling ; we and Amalek are weighed,
And Justice poises even now our fates.

HEBER.

Break off ! Here comes the Queen's own chamberlain.

[*Enter* HATACH.

HATACH.

Honour to Mordecai ! The Queen commands
His instant presence near the banquet-room,
To be at hand should the king summon him.

MORDECAI.

Quick to the congregation ; bid them raise
Their souls in prayers and praises to the Lord.
Now, now the time ! Good Heber, haste away !

[Exit MORDECAI and HATACH.]

HEBER.

And here too comes the bad Amalekite,
Humbler, it seems, and accompanied by friends ;
He surely is crestfallen ; I'll avoid them.

[Exit ; and enter HAMAN, ZERESH, HOBONAH, &c.]

HAMAN.

Now fare thee well, kind Zeresh ; turn thee back ;
When next we meet, be it with better cheer !
In Esther's favour I am confident
To find some antidote for this day's ill.

ZERESH.

Take heed, my princely husband ; guard thyself,
Take in thine over-sail, lest sudden gust
Of Fortune overset thee, bark and all.
What's past is past ; think not of remedy
In that defeature, but how best to save
Thyself and all of us. Do we not know
From our traditions, though that Israel falls
Into the depth of abject wretchedness,
How ever again he doth shoot up anew ?
Look to thyself, and have a careful heed.

HAMAN.

Fear not ; I not mistrust the monarch yet,
And certainly Queen Esther favours me.

ZERESH.

Your words speak comfort, but your ashy cheek
And sunken eye discourse of fear and shame.
Recall thyself, great Haman ! Play the game,
Since 'tis resolved, boldly and with all skill.
Let life be on thy cheek, and in thine eyes—
Fie ! Shall a prince, invited to a feast,
Even by his Queen, droop like a wretched rogue

Convicted in the very act of theft ?
Put on a courage, if thou hast it not.

HAMAN.

Two banquets, and on two successive days,
Only the king and I called by the Queen ;
'Tis plain she favours me : farewell, good wife !
I'll bring thee kindly words and messages,
And above all myself in safety back.

[*Exit ZERESH and train.*

Why is it thus with me ? My spirit fails,
E'en like the cock's, when, beaten from his range,
He droops his feathers and forgets his pride.

HORBONAH.

Come, we must on ; 'tis close upon the time,
And, with whatever appetite, thou must
Go to the banquet. On my life the king
Meant no disparagement ; thy favour stands.
But we must on, as I must answer it,
Who was despatched to bring thee to the feast.

HAMAN.

Horbonah ! I am very sick at heart.
I gave thee thine appointment ; and I think

Thou lovest me;—now that my wife is gone,
I care not to confess so much to thee,
I fear I know not what; the mind full oft
Presages truly, be it good or ill,
And feels the coming fate it cannot read.
And now, methinks, the strong-compacted earth,
On which I tread, is but a hollow crust
Ready to break with me. But let us in.

[*Exeunt.*

Ante-room.—Queen's Apartments.

CHORUS.

Not now, as once, can Judah's daughter
Lightly dance and sweetly sing;
When Judah's race is doomed to slaughter
By the cruel gentile king.
For melody is wont to brighten
The sparkling stream of sunny gladness;
The soul of Music breathes to lighten
The darkness of a mellow sadness:
But speechless Awe and wildered Fear
Heed not, feel not, cannot hear!

Where proud Euphrates rolls his stream,
Passing like a monarch on,

With flashing wave and golden gleam
Mid the domes of Babylon;
Our Masters bade us sing a song—
A song of our own pleasant land;
The willow-trees we drooped among;
We trembled at the stern command.
How could we sing that song for them,
Far from thee, Jerusalem?

We sat down by the haughty stream,
Heedless of its golden gleam;
Reckless of that present fear—
Our scornful Masters frowning there;
Our harps upon the trees we hung,
Nor for their angry threats we sung.
But fastly fell our bitter tears,
For hopes and scenes of other years.
What could Judah's hapless daughter
Do but weep by Babel's water,
When they bade her sing for them,
Far from thee, Jerusalem?

My beautiful! My pleasant land!
Which my fathers tilled and trod—
The guerdon won by Joshua's hand
And the free-gift of our God!

Crisped brook, and glorious river !
Which mine eyes may never see ;
Will He not again deliver
Isaac's seed from jeopardy ?
Must we perish, root and stem,
Far from thee, Jerusalem ?

No flowers and roses, crowns and palms
For our warriors at the gate ;
No white-robed choir, no joyful psalms—
Salem now is desolate.
Captives bound in Heathenesse—
Though we would, we cannot fly :
While he mocks at our distress,
Amalek swears that we shall die,
And the king of all the land
Has given us into Amalek's hand.

In this alone we yet are free—
Sion ! We remember thee.
Haman's hate and Haman's power,
If God permit, must have their hour.
But Haman's power nor Haman's hate
Shall make our Israel desolate ;
Nor all the dynasties that reign,
If God will give us strength again.

Hear us ! King of Glory ! Hear us !
Be with sword and buckler near us !
Then shall Judah break the neck
Of accursed Amalek.

MORDECAI (*who has entered while they are singing*).

My soul accepts that word of prophecy,
Daughters of Israel ! Innocents oft-times,
Pure-bosomed maidens, and young children, free
From the world's grosser stains, have unawares
Given intimations of the present God,
Then speaking through their organs. I repeat
The word, not doubting it prophetic—
“Now shall Judah break the neck
Of accursed Amalek !”
The Queen commanded me to wait her pleasure ;
Is she already in the banquet-room ?

CHORUS.

She there expects the king ; remain thou here
Till thou art sent for. Like a new-made bride
Looks our Hadassah—Ay ! So beautiful,
So lovely that the king must love her dearly.
She bade us hope the best ; and smilingly,
Yet with a serious sadness, she put on
Her royal robes, and brilliant coronet ;

And smiled in such a sort as shewed she thought
Of higher royalty—an inborn greatness,
That could, at worst of times, sustain itself
By its own true intrinsic sovereignty.
Hark ! 'Tis the music ! There he comes ! He comes !
The handsome Persian, fairest man of men !
We must attend him in the banquet-room.

[*Exeunt.*

MORDECAI.

Almighty King ! Lord of all things that live !
Thou knowest nor in pride nor in contempt
I bowed not down to Haman ; for content
I could have been, for Israel's sake, to kiss
The soles of his feet ; but Thy religious Awe
Forbade all worship to Thine enemy.
And now Lord God and King, Thy people spare !
We do confess our sins ! The contrite heart,
And sighs and groans our only sacrifice ;
The dust, in which we sink our heads, our Altar ;
Thy Word and Promises our only trust ;
Our degradation and our helplessness,
Our very shame and anguish—our appeal ;
Thy mercy, glory, and resistless power
Our only weapons, which alone can save us.
Our enemies and Thine now think to bring us

To nought; yea! they desire but to destroy
The inheritance that hath been always Thine
From the beginning; but despise not, Thou,
The portion saved from Egypt for Thyself!
Now hear me, and be very merciful
To Thine inheritance; and turn to joy
Our sorrow, that our life may bless Thy Name;
Shut not, oh Lord! the mouths of them that praise
Thee!

*The Banquet-room. AHASUERUS, ESTHER, and
HAMAN at the banquet. Chamberlains and
CHORUS in attendance.*

AHASUERUS.

What ails thee, Haman? Are thy senses dazed
By the Queen's presence? Come! A cup of wine—
The sparkling joy that gladdens as we drink it;
That steals away our cares, a merry thief!
And runs on gaily dancing in our veins,
Filling the thoughtful dullard with bright hopes,
And shapes of beauty and ambrosial dreams.
A health to Esther—my delight and pride—
The crown and glory of mine empery!

HAMAN.

May the Queen live for ever ! As she is best,
Highest in station, and most beautiful
Of all that Earth calls fair, and add to this,
Discreetest, wisest, and most bountiful,
So may she be still happiest ! All her foes,
If foe she have, lie prostrate at her feet ;
Confusion upon all who have devised,
Or may devise ill against her, or hers ;
And perish Haman in that very instant
He is convicted of disparagement
Or despite to the meanest life she cares for !

ESTHER.

Thanks, royal lord ! The king's prosperity,
Honour and health must ever be most dear
To Esther's heart—so long as Esther lives.

AHASUERUS.

Fair Queen, and wise as fair ! Thine entertainment
Makes me thy debtor ; and thou hast a suit,
Which I have granted thee before I hear it.
My best joy ! Tell me what is thy request ?
And what is thy petition ? It is thine—
Although it be the gift of half my kingdom.

ESTHER (*kneeling*).

If I have found such favour with my lord,
And I am truly pleasing in his eyes;
At my petition let my life be given me,
At my request the life too of my people.
For we are sold—my people and myself,
To be destroyed and to be slain—to perish.
But if we had been sold for bondwomen,
And bondmen, I had held my tongue, nor spoken,
Although our enemy is all unable
To countervail the damage done the king.

AHASUERUS (*raising her*).

What does this mean? What enemy? Who durst
Presume to do so even in his thought?

ESTHER.

This wicked Haman is that enemy.

AHASUERUS.

So! Haman! By my sceptre and my crown
'Tis even so. Guilt withers in his face.
Guards, there! Let none depart the chamber. So!
'Tis very well. My excellent good Haman!

Not a word—not a word! My heart, and brain!

Queen, with thy leave, a moment to myself—

[*Going, he returns.*]

Dearest! Take heart. Thy life is surely safe—

Thy life!—It only shall be reached through mine.

[*Goes into the garden.*]

HAMAN (*aside*).

All lost! With what a frown he parted hence!

My sentence is already sealed—death—death!

What can I do? What will become of me?

I stand upon a bridge of glass—it breaks.

Oh! The whirl of the terrible abyss!

I'm mad!—mad!—mad! No hope, and no escape!

The Queen is merciful—

Most noble Queen!

How could thy servant Haman ever think

Of practice against thee? Or how imagine

The Queen was of that generous race, proscribed,

Because its nobleness was dangerous?

I never in thought reached such atrocity,

To mean thee any harm. One word of pity!

Oh! Listen not to vengeance—Pity! Spare me!

ESTHER.

Vengeance is God's, not mine. He will repay.

HAMAN.

But one word to the king, and that word pardon !
Do thou but pardon me, and tell him so,
And his will follow ; be mine intercessor,
And give me life, and prove my gratitude.
None, like myself, knows how to neutralise
That fatal writ, and turn it into good.
Hast thou a foe ? But speak—he is removed.
A friend ? Good Mordecai ?—He is advanced.
Not one soft dew-drop ? One refreshing word ?

ESTHER.

Bad man ! Think of thy state, and reconcile
Thee to thyself, if thy great wickedness
Can yet repent. I must not interfere ;
And if I had the power, I would not save thee.
Thou wholesale murderer ! That didst not spare
Woman or man, old age or infancy,
Or unborn child—art thou afraid to die ?

HAMAN.

My honours and my riches—let them go ;
But only life ! And let it be dragged out
In prisoned solitude—in infamy.
O terrible stern Beauty ! Severe form

Of awful Justice! Divine Nemesis!
Into whose dreadful eyes I dare not look—
Oh! By the bosom upon which you hung
In infancy—and by your father's soul—
And by these sacred knees on which I place
My hands in reverential loyalty,
Thus lowly bowing down—

*[The King enters suddenly, with his attendants
and guards.]*

AHASUERUS.

What! Will he force
The Queen before mine eyes?

[They cover Haman's face.]
Away with him!

HORBONAH.

The gallows stands within his court, whereon
He meant this day to hang up Mordecai,
Who spake good for the king.

AHASUERUS.

Hang him thereon.

[HAMAN is led out.]

So much for Haman! Now, Queen Esther, speak!
What else can the king do? Call Mordecai!

ESTHER.

The king has found it. I am of the race
The wicked one proscribed, and Mordecai
My kinsman ; both of us of Benjamin,
And of the royal house. How fallen we,
And the still nobler line of royal David,
The king knows well. Our city is our shame ;
Our silver changed to dross ; our gold to brass ;
The Assyrian outrages do yet defile
Our holy hill : our law is never read ;
Our temple, from its ashes builded up,
Is scantily furnished ; we are buffeted,
And sorely beat ; scattered to every wind ;
And have been sold to slaughter. Let the king
Prevent this mischief, and those ills repair.

[*Enter MORDECAI.*

AHASUERUS.

Thou knowest how the matter stands with us,
Good Mordecai ; hast thou a remedy ?
The ill that I have done I would undo ;
But I cannot repeal the writ I made,
Nor take away the seal I sealed thereon.
Thine now is Haman's office ; counsel me.

MORDECAI.

Great king! Thy servant thanks thee for thy favour;
And thus to save the people: let the king
Despatch swift messengers through all his realm,
To every lord and prince and satrapy,
And bid them that upon the coming day
Of execution, Jews and Israelites
Have sufferance to stand on their defence.
So shall they learn the pleasure of the king;
And this shall stay the cutting off our race;
For few will dare, thro' private enmity,
To act against thy will; and on their heads,
Who venture it, the damage will return.

AHASUERUS.

So be it done; and see to it thyself.
Thine other prayers, Queen Esther, have been heard,
And by a royal edict I will do
After thy wishes. Whatsoe'er he can
Ahasuerus wills to do for thee.

[*Exit.*

MORDECAI.

My precious Queen, what praises do we owe
To Him who gave thee, on this trial-day,

The spirit of wisdom and best utterance,
Himself making thy words effectual !
Glory to God for this deliverance !
The people must be put upon their guard,
And trusty couriers instantly despatched.
May all of us, with devout thankfulness,
Praise, magnify, and glorify His Name,
Who now hath saved us, and will save us yet.

[*Exit.*]

ESTHER.

Upon my knees, and with my heart as low,
I render Thee, All-seeing Infinite !
The homage of the humbleness Thy grace
Preferred to this great work ; and not to me,
But to Thy Name be all the glory, Lord !
And oh, my Father, and my King, and God !
Accept my prayers for this Ahasuerus ;
Teach him to know Thee ! Open Thou his eyes,
That he may see the glory of the Lord ;
And touch his heart, that he may learn indeed
That our Jehovah is the only God !

CHORUS.

Awaken, my glory ! Lute and harp, awake !
Awake, my soul ! For we must sing
The praises of our Saviour King.

Who else but He this painful yoke can break ?
Who from Haman's ready knife
Now hath saved His people's life ?
Who but the Lord ? To Him we raise
Our voices and our hearts in hymns of joyful praise.

Ye nations, hear ! The Lord our God is great.
The hearts of kings are in His hand ;
Evil and good, at His command,
Work out His ends : His will in all is fate.
Vain the power and wit of man,
Open force, and subtle plan ;
Who can Omnipotence defy,
Do battle with His might, or shun His watchful eye.

In harp and heart may discord be,
No day of Freedom dawns for me ;
Blighted youth, dishonoured age,
Sorrow, hatred, envy, rage ;
Stings of fiery flying snakes ;
And the bed that Terror shakes ;
All that makes this life a curse—
All that dreads an after worse ;
Cleave to me, when I forget
The vast unutterable debt,
Which creature cannot pay, to Him who saves us yet.

The dangerous foe, the spawn of Amalek,
 Around us wraps his deadly coils,
 And in his jaw dark venom boils.
Behold his gorgeous scales—his crested neck,
 Swollen with his poisonous breath,
 And his tongue that scatters death.
 He is in act to strike ; but, lo !
The serpent sinks beneath an unexpected blow.

Where now his pride, his many-folded spire,
 His rabid rage that mocked at ruth,
 His armed jaw, his deadly tooth,
His eyes that sparkled with a baleful fire ?
 There the cursed Haman see
 Hanging on the cursed tree !
 Fool ! Fool ! Who thought to do despite
Through Jacob's side to God ; behold the Amalekite !

When was the Mighty slack to save
His chosen from the foeman's glaive ?
Never—while they walked aright,
Faithful in their Maker's sight ;
Never—while they worshipt Him,
Throned betwixt the Cherubim ;
Never—till to idols they
Stoopt to bow the knee and pray ;

Never,—till to Him untrue,
A thousand harlot loves they knew,
And from their self-digged pit their bitter water drew.

Awake, my glory! Lute and harp, awake!
For, rapt into ecstatic trance,
I see the brightening years advance.
The Persian monarch, for his Esther's sake,
Won by Truth's immortal grace,
Reassures our scattered race;
"On his defence let Jacob stand:"
The Assassin thinks to slay, but falls by Jacob's hand.

Hadassah shares the Persian's throne and bed;
His heart is hers, and hers is God's.
She tells her suit; the monarch nods
Assent; and Judah's flower uplifts her head:
"Queenly Salem disinter
From her ruinous sepulchre;
Rebuild her walls; her circuit fill.
And let her sacred choir acclaim their holy hill."

The king was sitting on his throne;
His eyes with fitful anger shone;
Only at the monarch's call
Subjects tread the presence-hall;

Death for all shall violate
Persian despot's veiled state !
" Ha ! Who dares ? " With flashing eyes,
As the door-valves turn, he cries ;
Now his features joy express—
For, reverent, in her royal dress,
The Queen before him stands in all her loveliness.

But Time and Circumstance God's will obey.
It is a fearful thing to meet
The lion in his wild retreat,
When hunger drives him forth to track his prey.
Dreadful is his bristling mane—
And the roar that fills the plain—
His back collected for the spring—
The terrors of his brow—the madness of the king !

Nor he—nor his blood-lapping lioness,
Surprised within her cavern rude,
When she defends her royal brood—
Then most revengeful and most pitiless—
Has more peril in her eyes,
Than in frown of despot lies,
When doubt or danger stirs his mind,
And he to save himself would slaughter half his kind.

The lion, like a lamb, is meek ;
And smiles are on the despot's cheek.
Now in gentle mood his hand
Stretches forth the golden wand—
Golden rod ! That saves the life
Of his own imperial wife.
Beauty ! Thy subduing eye
Tames the heart of Tyranny ;
And remorseless pride of place
For thee must smooth his clouded face,
Confess thy gentle might, and feel the power of grace.

Although the circlet of her walls is shorn,
And by her broken gateway now
Shamed Salem veils her realmless brow,
And weeping wails her widowhood, forlorn ;
Soon with many a chosen gem

For her royal diadem,
The Queen of Cities shall arise,
And lift her starry front before the smiling skies.

The Mount of Vision shall again resound
To daily hymns of joy and praise ;
The sacrificial flame shall blaze ;
The priest and Levite in their place be found.
Loud hosannas to the King !


Who His outcast race shall bring,
In His own time, from every wind,
Their bruised and broken heal, and all their bound
unbind.

In trouble we will never fear—
For God is with us everywhere;
Though the furious heathen swell;
Though their triumph now they tell;
God will break the bow in sunder;
Rive the spear and car with thunder;
Make the frantic wars to cease;
Fill the world with fruits of peace:—
The Lord of Hosts is with us still—
Again will keep His holy hill—
Bring home His own again, and all His Word fulfil.



POSTSCRIPT.

ARCHBISHOP USHER was of opinion that Darius Hystaspes was the Ahasuerus of our text. Racine was of the same opinion. Joseph Scaliger, and some moderna, decide that Xerxes was the personage in question. The similarity between the names of Amestris, the wife of Xerxes mentioned by Herodotus, and of Esther, is one of their chief reasons for this opinion. Herodotus, however, who has given some disgusting particulars of the cruelty of Amestris, expressly states that she was the daughter of the Persian Otanes (lib. 7, ch. 61), who was leader of the Persian troops in that confused armament of many tongues and nations which Xerxes led against Greece. The text of Scripture asserts that Esther was a daughter of Benjamin, and an orphan from her infancy, who was reared by Mordecai. This at once shews the fallacy of the synchronisms of Eickhorn. "In the third year of his reign Ahasuerus summons a divan of all the great officers of the kingdom at Susa, whom he banquets and entertains 180 days; in his third year Xerxes, at a great assembly, deliberates and takes measures for the subjugation of Greece. In his seventh year Ahasuerus marries Esther; in his seventh year Xerxes returns discomfited to Susa, and abandons himself to the pleasures of his harem." "Xerxes had a son by Hamestris that was marriageable in the seventh year of his reign (Herodotus, lib. 9, ch. 108). Esther was not married to Ahasuerus



till his seventh year, and could not possibly have been taken into his bed sooner than two years before." (See Prideaux.)

All the most ancient and the best authorities agree that Ahasuerus was Artaxerxes. The Septuagint, throughout the whole book of Esther, translate Ahasuerus by the name Artaxerxes. In the apocryphal book of Esther he is never called by any other name; and Josephus positively asserts that Ahasuerus was Artaxerxes. (Longimanus, lib. 11, ch. 6.)

It is of some importance to the character of Esther that she, whom the Jews yet reverence as one of the best and noblest of women, should not be confounded with Amestris, who was alike infamous for her cruelties and for her adulteries.

It was by Divine Providence that Esther was called to the throne; it was by her instrumentality that the destruction of the Jews was arrested; that Mordecai was advanced; Ezra and Nehemiah commissioned; the circuit of Jerusalem repeopled, and the waste places of Judah recultivated. It was because Esther lay in his bosom that the King Artaxerxes so remarkably favoured her people; and all this I ascribe to Providence, though it be not a word in the vocabulary of your philosophy—falsely so called.

The reader is requested to attend to this chronological table, extracted from Prideaux, as explanatory of some of the historical allusions in this poem.

	B. C.
The Jews return to Jerusalem, and begin to rebuild the city and temple	535
In this work they are hindered by the Samaritans.	
Cyrus dies	530
Cambyeses succeeds him.	
He wounds the Egyptian god Apis, which dies of the wound	523
Cambyeses dies	522

B. C.

After the short usurpation of the Magians, Darius is made king	521
The rebuilding of the Temple is resumed by the Jews . .	520
The Samaritans again disturb them ; but a decree being obtained from Darius for their protection, they go on with the work ; and the Temple is at length rebuilt and dedicated	515
Darius dies	486
Xerxes, his successor, is slain	465
Artaxerxes Longimanus, the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther, after the wars of the succession, is firmly settled on the throne	463
Esther made Queen, and Ezra commissioned	458
Haman plots the destruction of the Jews	453
Nehemiah sent governor to Judea, and rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem	445
Repeoples the city, and proceeds to reform church and state in Judah	444
The Canon of the Hebrew Scriptures settled by Ezra .	443
The books of Malachi, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther were added afterwards, and the Canon finally closed.	
Artaxerxes dies	424



66, *Brook Street, London, W.*

October, 1865.



Messrs. Saunders, Otley, & Co.'s
**LOT OF NEW BOOKS AND
NEW EDITIONS.**

THE REV. S. C. MALAN.

In 1 vol. crown 8vo.

A History of the Georgian Church.

Translated from the Russian of P. IOSELIAN, by the Rev. S. C.
MALAN, M.A., Vicar of Broadwindsor.

[In the Press.]

In 3 vols. post 8vo.

Snooded Jessaline ;

Or, The Honour of a House.

A NOVEL.

By MRS. T. K. HERVEY.

[Just ready.]

In 3 vols.

The Soldier of Three Queens.

A Narrative of Personal Adventure.

By CAPTAIN HENDERSON. [In the Press.]

In 1 vol., with Page Illustrations.

From Christmas to Christmas.

POEMS. By MRS. T. K. HERVEY.

[In the Press.

In 1 vol., fcap. 8vo.

The Last Crusader :

A POEM.

In Four Cantos.

[In the Press.

In 1 vol. 4to. With Six Page Illustrations.

The Maiden of the Iceberg.

A POEM.

[In the Press.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, bevelled edges, 6s., cloth.

The Staff Surgeon ;

Or, LIFE IN ENGLAND AND CANADA.

A Story. By E. S. T.

[Ready.

"A pretty, interesting story, pleasantly told, and distinguished by a quiet grace. It is in another sense a charming book, delightful to look at, to read or to touch."
—*Court Circular*.

"The tale is fluently written, and contains some pleasant descriptive passages."
—*Dispatch*.

"Pleasantly and genially written; and

scattered through various parts of the narrative are to be found some truthful and life-like descriptions of scenes both in this country and in Canada."—*Observer*.

"A thoroughly readable novel. The story is highly interesting, and some of the characters exceedingly well drawn."—*Star*.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, bevelled edges, 9s., cloth.

Thoughtful Moments.

By ONE OF THE PEOPLE.

[Ready.

"A thoughtful book, highly suggestive of important matter to both clergy and laity."—*Clerical Journal*.

"The author has the merit of stating his views with clearness and ability."—*Star*.

In 2 vols. post 8vo. with an Introduction and Appendices.

Secret History of a Polish Insurrection.

By H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS,
Late Special Correspondent of the *Times* in Poland.

[Just Ready.

In 2 vols. post 8vo, with Portrait, 21s.

Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison.

Written by HERSELF.

With an INTRODUCTION by a FRIEND OF THE SOUTH.
[Ready.]

"Her memoirs are very ably and graphically written. They are useful so far as they exemplify the difference between American and English society."—*Morning Post*.

"'Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison' is one of those books into which the whole soul and spirit of the writer has evidently passed—which are too earnest for artistic construction, too real and heartfelt either for self concealment or self display."—*Saturday Review*.

"To say that these volumes are interesting would be far short of the truth. They are perfectly thrilling, and we strongly recommend all our readers whichever side they take of the controversy, to get them and judge for themselves."—*John Bull*.

"Linked for ever with the story of that fatal American war is the name of Belle Boyd, and this book, written by herself, possesses such deep interest of wonder and truth, that it cannot fail of general acceptance and popularity. Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison is the book of the season."—*Court Circular*.

"Belle Boyd's book will be read with interest, and will no doubt make a great sensation."—*Observer*.

"The contents of these volumes are extremely interesting."—*Reader*.

"It is pleasantly and on the whole modestly written."—*Index*.

"Belle Boyd's adventures surpass the best contrived fictions of our most popular writers."—*Morning Advertiser*.

"Will be read with avidity."—*Sunday Times*.

"Full of vivid glimpses of the late war."—*Globe*.

"In these volumes we have from her own pen the story of her daring deeds, her hairbreadth escapes and her unmerited sufferings. A narrative of extreme interest, all the more attractive because natural and unaffected."—*London Review*.

"The book is one which is certain to obtain popularity, and to be speedily in

the hands of most readers."—*Churchman*.

"Possesses high claims to attention."—*Literary Gazette*.

"The book is undoubtedly a remarkable one."—*Dispatch*.

"Miss Belle Boyd (now Mrs. Hardinge) may fairly claim a niche beside those earlier heroines; having in one respect even a better right to the name of warrior than any of them, since she actually received a regular commission as Captain in the Confederate Army, and was attached to Stonewall Jackson's staff as one of his aides-de-camp."—*Evening Standard*.

"The story of the adventures, misfortunes, imprisonments, and persecutions of Mrs. Hardinge, better known as Belle Boyd, will do much to relieve the Federals of the stigma under which they have been labouring of treating their prisoners with harshness and brutality."—*Post*.

"Belle Boyd may well be contented with the recollection that in the fearful struggle which is now terminated she played no inglorious part."—*Morning Herald*.

"Doubly attractive, not only as telling a tale of deeds of daring skilfully executed, and dangers and hardships courageously confronted and endured, far surpassing in interest the wildest imagination of the sensation novelist."—*Standard*.

"Modestly and simply written and we think our readers will rise from the perusal with a true sympathy for its fair writer."—*Guardian*.

"The name of Belle Boyd is well known to all who took an interest in the late civil war in America."—*London Review*.

"There are few persons conversant with the American correspondence of our leading Journals during the late awful struggle of the South against the North, to whom the name of Belle Boyd, the Rebel Spy, is not known."—*Young Englishwoman*.

In 1 vol. Foolscap 8vo., 3s 6d.

Jersey Legends;

In VERSE.

By THOMAS WILLIAMS.

[Ready.]

In 3 vols. post 8vo.

The Uttermost Farthing.

A NOVEL.

By CECIL GRIFFITH.

[Ready

"The story is one of character, influenced by accident, and the psychology of the thing is detailed and curious, and has, no doubt, been studied from the life."—*Reader.*

"A terrible prose tragedy; but it presents remarkable materials for powerful writing, and the author has turned them to the best possible account."—*Court Circular.*

"A good and gracefully written novel; the plot being cleverly conceived and well sustained. The strong, passionate, sisterly love here portrayed for an erring and unfortunate brother is tenderly and faithfully rendered. The whole book abounds in passages at once grand, pathetic, and natural."—*John Bull.*

"A work of very unusual promise; indeed, of more than promise; for it is itself, if not the best, decidedly one of the best, novels of the day. The plot is good and well worked out, and the characters drawn with a firm and skilful hand."—*Church and State Review.*

"How this, and much more is told, only a perusal of the story which we have

barely indicated, will show; the involutions and perplexities of feeling and action, and the revelation of the inner struggle going on behind, what strikes us as one of the most painful positions ever penned."—*Globe.*

"The author is certainly deserving of praise for the novelty of plot in this book."—*Observer.*

"The author of 'The Uttermost Farthing' has written a novel which will make its readers anxious for another production of the same pen."—*Star.*

"Alan Valery's indolent, passionate character is well drawn. May Valery is excellently conceived."—*Press.*

"Of 'The Uttermost Farthing' we may conscientiously say, that taking story, style, and the skilful manner in which the plot is worked out together, there are few existing novels in our language which may justly be accorded a higher rank."—*Sun.*

"The book contains some touches of real feeling."—*Guardian.*

"Told with considerable power. The story is an interesting one."—*Churchman.*

In 1 vol., post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

Tangles and Tales.

Being the RECORD OF A TWELVEMONTH'S IMBROGLIO.

By E. C. MOGRIDGE.

[Ready.

"We have shown that Mr. Mogridge knows how to tell a good story cleverly."—*John Bull.*

"Written in a light and pleasant style. Some of the tales have a romantic, others somewhat of a tragic interest, and a fair proportion of them have incidents of love and mystery very gracefully interwoven in the narrative."—*Observer.*

Mr. Mogridge possesses all the talent necessary to eliminate a plot, with not a little aptness of description, no small power of observation, and a real sense of humour, as his volume sufficiently proves."—*Literary Gazette.*

"It is highly to be praised for the healthy tone it manifests."—*Bell's Messenger.*

"This pleasant volume of 'Tales' is by Mr. Mogridge, a son of 'Old Humphrey,' whose useful and simple duode-

cimo volumes are so common in the pack of the Diocesan book-hawker, and are so appreciated by the purchasers from it * * * Some of these tales are of far more than average merit, and they are all of them very readable; and any one who wants a chatty, soothing story-book cannot do better than invest in 'Tangles and Tales.'"—*Churchman.*

"As the scene of several is laid in foreign parts, a reasonable variety is secured to the characters and their surroundings."—*London Review.*

"The writer possesses no slight powers of observation, and his descriptive passages give to the mind something of the same effect as the sight of a carefully-drawn picture. We have derived great pleasure from the perusal of 'Tangles and Tales.'"—*Public Opinion.*

In 3 vols. post 8vo.

Aubrey Court.

A NOVEL.

By FRANK LYFIELD.

[Ready.]

"There are the makings of a good story in 'Aubrey Court.'"—*John Bull*.

"Whoever wishes to pass an agreeable hour or two, under the influence of light reading, free from violent spasmodic situations, may gratify his taste very largely by taking up Mr. Lyfield's clever specimen of fiction. Not only will pleasant writing be met with, but a plot will be discovered which preserves its unities throughout and terminates, as it had proceeded, very naturally. We know not whether 'Aubrey Court' is a first specimen of authorship; but if it be so, it gives not a few indications of intelligence and cleverness which may speedily be turned to considerable advantage."—*Bell's Messenger*.

"Too much praise cannot be awarded to the author of 'Aubrey Court' for the excessive care and attention he has shown in working out his plot. The story never flags from beginning to end; and if this be

the first novel from Mr. Lyfield's pen, the public may look forward to even a greater treat when next he comes before them."—*Morning Post*.

"We have read every page of it with pleasure. It is a healthy, pure, interesting novel, conveying pleasant scenes of life at home and abroad, in good, plain, idiomatic English; and to say thus much is to raise 'Aubrey Court' to a height immeasurably above that occupied by the large majority of English works of fiction."—*Sunday Times*.

"The moral tone of the book is unimpeachable. 'Aubrey Court' is of more than average merit."—*Churchman*.

"The characters are so skilfully drawn, and the style is at once so lively and so genial, that the tale cannot fail to be read with pleasure by such as possess healthy literary taste, and recognise the conscientiousness with which the author strives to copy nature."—*Dispatch*.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

The Notting Hill Mystery.

Compiled by CHARLES FELIX,

Author of "Velvet Lawn," etc.

[Ready.]

"Much ingenuity is displayed in framing such of the circumstances as may credibly be supposed to have actually existed."—*Reader*.

"The chain of evidence is traced throughout with great minuteness, and the whole narrative is well calculated to awaken and sustain the interest of the reader."—*Observer*.

"This book is a singular and not wholly unsuccessful attempt to enlist the attention of the reader by the simple yet subtle analysis of crime. In doing so Mr. Felix reminds us, not unfavourably, of some of the prose writings of Edgar Poe. It is a strange story strangely told."—*Churchman*.

"We have seldom read anything more ingenious than the manner in which the circumstantial detail of the crime or crimes supposed to form the Notting

Hill Mystery are narrated. Few more thoroughly mysterious, remarkable, and, we may add, more tantalising works have ever issued from the press."—*Sunday Times*.

"Among narratives of the mysterious, but circumstantial order, this is entitled to high rank."—*Dispatch*.

"To all whom a chain of intricate and peculiar evidence will interest we recommend this book, which surpasses anything in the same style we have met since Edgar Poe presented the world with his tales of the imagination."—*Court Circular*.

"It is a good specimen of the sensational story, of which the entire interest consists, not in the characters—which are scarcely indicated—but in the strangeness of the incidents and the complication of the plot."—*Guardian*.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

Donnington Hall.

A NOVEL.

By the Rev. F. TALBOT O'DONOGHUE,
Author of "St. Knighton's Keive," &c.

[Ready.

"This volume contains a very pleasing story, thoroughly natural in its style and admirably written. The characters are well defined, and present a very charming homely group to the reader's notice."—*Observer*.

"A highly entertaining work, and one in which the reader's interest will seldom if ever flag. The material itself of which the story is composed is not rich; but the embroidery with which it is overlaid is tasteful. Many of the characters are hit off with much skill and effect, and the picture of the little child wife is singularly pleasing."—*Sunday Times*.

"The construction of the tale is simple; but its pleasant, unaffected style of narra-

tion makes it extremely readable."—*Dispatch*.

"Mr. O'Donoghue has written a volume which will be read with pleasure, more for its sketches of every-day clerical life than for any interest that gathers round it as a novel."—*Public Opinion*.

"A quiet serious story. The tone of the book throughout is kindly and genial."—*London Review*.

"Donnington Hall' is an amusing and clever book."—*Western Morning News*.

"The society and scenery of the places in which the story is laid are described with the correctness of an artist who draws from nature."—*Shipping and Mercantile Gazette*.

COMPLETION OF MR. ARNOLD'S DALHOUSIE ADMINISTRATION.

In 2 vols. 8vo, 15s. each.

The Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration of British India.

By EDWIN ARNOLD, M.A., University College, Oxford.
Late Principal, Poonah College; and Fellow of the University of Bombay.

Contents of Vol. I.

The Acquisition and Administration of the Punjab.

Contents of Vol. II.

The Annexation of Pegu, Nagpore, and Oude, and a General Review of Lord Dalhousie's Rule in India. [Ready.

"To those who look with interest on Indian affairs this work will doubtless afford considerable gratification. Undoubtedly the period of Lord Dalhousie's administration in India was a brilliant one."—*Morning Advertiser*.

"Of the work as a whole it would be impossible to express any judgment which was not highly favourable. It is full of information; it is almost everywhere guided by the calm and impartial spirit of a true historian; its style is always vigorous and sometimes brilliant. It is indeed a timely and a valuable contribution to the History of British India."—*Morning Star*.

"Mr. Arnold does ample justice to the

grasp of Lord Dalhousie's mind, the dignity of his character, and the generosity of his heart; and the 'History' which tells this strange conversion of scattered barbarous, corrupt, and oppressed heathen principalities into a British Empire, stands forth with all the splendid vividness of an historical epic."—*Daily Telegraph*.

"Mr. Arnold's work, however, while its animated style carries the reader on, is a valuable contribution to the history of the period with which it is concerned, and his judgment of Lord Dalhousie's character, as well as his public policy, seems to have been formed with impartiality."—*Guardian*.

In 1 vol. 8vo, post 8vo, 6s. 6d.

Modern Scepticism in relation to Modern Science ;

IN REFERENCE TO THE DOCTRINES OF COLENSO, HUXLEY, LYELL, DARWIN, &c.

By J. R. YOUNG, Author of "Science Elucidative of Scripture," &c. [Ready.

"Mr. Young brings to the discussion of his subject a clear and elegant style—no small advantage to the reader, when the subject itself is recondite or little known. The author argues like a philosopher and writes like a gentleman."—*Literary Gazette*.

"The book is well worthy the perusal of those interested in the discussion of these questions."—*Press*.

"The work is an admirable antidote to the scepticism of the age."—*Homilist*.

"Those who are pained at the assumed antagonism between Science and Revelation, will read Mr. Young's volume with sincere pleasure, and will thank him for having taken up the cause of truth so successfully."—*Public Opinion*.

"The author writes in a correct and pleasing style, eschewing, as far as it is possible, anything that might approach to scientific pedantry of language."—*London Review*.

In 1 vol. small 8vo, 3s. 6d.

Life's Paths.

A TALE OF OUR OWN DAY.

By the Author of "Gentle Influence," "Amy's Trials," &c.

With Frontispiece.

[Ready.

"We seldom remember coming across a story with less "sensation" in it, and yet so really interesting. Some very valuable lessons are taught in an eminently natural manner. The different characters are very well drawn. We suspect several are studies from real life."—*Church Review*.

"'Life's Paths' may be safely recom-

mended, and that which it professes to aim at it successfully works out, and that is no slight thing to say of any book in these days."—*Churchman*.

"A well intentioned, conscientiously written book, wherein it is impossible to find anything objectionable."—*Ming. Post*.

"The tale is pleasing and refined."—*Globe*.

Cheap Edition, in 1 vol. post 8vo, 1s. 6d.

The Davenport Brothers :

A BIOGRAPHY OF IRA ERASTUS DAVENPORT AND WILLIAM HENRY DAVENPORT, commonly known as the "BROTHERS DAVENPORT."

With an Account of Eleven Years of Preternatural Phenomena and Extraordinary Physical and Psychical Manifestations.

By T. L. NICHOLS, M.D.,

Author of "Forty Years in America," &c.

[Ready.

"The book is replete with adventures calculated, we have no doubt, to produce in England effects similar to those experienced in America."—*Observer*.

"We commend this volume to our readers. Dr. Nichols had a difficult task, but it could not have been performed better."—*Herald*.

"The book which Dr. Nichols has

published is precisely what is wanted. Short, simple, and clear : not pretending to explain, hardly, indeed, discussing the question as to whether explanation is possible ; as fair a narrative written by a believer could possibly be—this volume commends itself to all. None can possibly find it dull."—*Standard*.

In Foolscep 8vo, cloth, Second Edition, 5s.

The History of a Bit of Bread.

Being Letters to a Child, on the Life of Man and of Animals.

By Jean Macé.

Translated from the French and edited by Mrs. ALFRED GATTY,
Author of "Parables from Nature," &c.

PART I. MAN.

"Mrs. Gatty has here favoured the public with a volume weighty in its matter, fascinating in its form, and in its moral and religious tone above all praise."—*London Review*.

"This work, especially intended for the use of the young, explains in a manner both intelligible and interesting, 'the history of life as sustained and supported in the human race.'"—*Dispatch*.

"Written in a reverent spirit deserving of commendation—a fact that the name of the translator alone would guarantee."—*John Bull*.

"To Mrs. Gatty great praise is due. * * * * * The translation seems excellent. A charming little book."—*Church Review*.

"Let us commend this pleasant little book to parents and guardians throughout

the length and breadth of the British dominions, since it is one of the very best of its class that we have met with."—*Bell's Messenger*.

"It exhibits the honest pains, the desire to please, the unmistakeable labour, which characterise all Mrs. Gatty undertakes for the acceptance of the public."—*Press*.

"This little book has reached its eighth edition on the other side of the Channel, having been adopted by the University Commission of Paris among their prize books."—*Athenæum*.

"Written for children, grown up people will read it with profit and pleasure. Eight editions have made the French public familiar with the original, and Mrs. Gatty has conferred no slight boon on the English by a translation which faithfully preserves its best features."—*Spectator*.

Also,

In Foolscep 8vo, cloth, 4s. 6d.

PART II. ANIMALS.

Completing the Work.

[Ready.

"We had the pleasure of noticing the first part some months ago. We can only repeat our words of praise. The fact is we cannot praise it enough. Everything which can contribute to a most charming and instructive book is here to be found. Exquisite humour, a highly moral tone, most useful instruction—what more can be wanted to make up an acceptable book? The translator has done her work so felicitously that the book reads like an original production."—*Church Review*.

"A charming guide to many important scientific subjects, necessary to be known by all persons aspiring to be considered well-educated."—*Clerical Journal*.

"As in the first part of this work the translator and editress, Mrs. Gatty has

now and then slightly altered the original, with a view to rendering the illustrations more intelligible and interesting to the mind of an English child. We reiterate the opinion we have already expressed with regard to the first part of the present work—that it is a valuable little treatise, containing much that is interesting and instructive not only to children but to adults."—*London Review*.

"Though especially meant for children, and adapted to their capacity, it may nevertheless be read by their elders with profit; and its compactness, lucidity of arrangement, and absence of confusing detail, combined with humorous illustration, makes it extremely readable."—*Dispatch*.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, bevelled edges, 6s.

Arno's Waters;

AND OTHER POEMS.

By FRANCES JANE FORSAYTH.

{Ready.

In 3 vols. post 8vo.

Rington Priory.

A NOVEL. By ETHEL HONE.

[Ready.

"The moral is unobjectionable."—*Athenaeum*.

"A very excellent novel of its class. Written with a natural force which suggests very little effort, it is free from affectation or strained effects."—*Reader*.

"Reminds us of 'Emma', and 'Sense and Sensibility,' 'Pride and Prejudice,' and the rest of that mildly brilliant constellation."—*Globe*.

"'Rington Priory' is an interesting story, with an air of truthfulness."—*Press*.

"The incidents, conversations, and plot are eminently natural and interesting; and the entire tone of the novel so perfectly healthy, that we consider it a positive relief from the morbid works with which the modern press so almost uniformly teems."—*Star*.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, elegantly bound, 7s. 6d.

Tales at the Outspan;

Or, Adventures in the Wild Regions of Southern Africa.

By CAPTAIN A. W. DRAYSON,

Author of "Sporting Scenes in South Africa, &c.

New and Cheaper Edition,

Illustrated with numerous Woodcuts.

[Ready.

"To read about adventures with wild beasts is always pleasant; in fact, there is an idea in the youthful mind that lions and tigers were created specially to furnish material for exciting stories, and in very truth Captain Drayson gives us adventure enough and tells us as much in one volume as we have a right to look for, about lions and leopards, elephants and buffaloes, not to speak of those more savage animals called Kaffirs."—*Herald*.

"Tales at the Outspan" will be found an admirable Gift Book.—The binding is so rich, the illustrations are so very good, and above all the tales are so enthralling, that every reader, be he man or boy, will

delight in the volume."—*Standard*.

"We are happy to see that this volume has reached a second edition. It is a boy's book of the very best kind, a book of adventure, peril, and excitement, pervaded by a most healthful flavour of exertion, and enterprise, and self denial."—*Spectator*.

"Among the most pleasant books that have been written on South African adventure is this by Captain Drayson, inasmuch as it is not a mere record of wild beast butchery, but describes stirring combats with these by no means contemptible foes, and the savage native tribes."—*Dispatch*.

In 3 vols. post 8vo.

Macaria.

A NOVEL.

By AUGUSTA J. EVANS,

Author of "Beulah," &c.

[Ready.

"The tone is high, the language chaste and pure, the characters noble, and the purpose laudable."—*Bell's Messenger*.

"The work is written with much ability, and striking incidents follow each other in such rapid succession that the interest is sustained throughout."—*Morning Advertiser*.

"In many respects the book is pleasing and the style is often forcible, and the moral tone is unobjectionable."—*Observer*.

"Written in an earnest and enthusiastic tone. As another evidence of the strong emotions which animate the hearts of the women of the South, and which of themselves are sufficient to proclaim the deathless endurance of the struggle for Southern independence, 'Macaria' has an interest peculiarly its own."—*Sun*.

"Much that is really noble and excellent. The picture drawn by Miss Evans,

of the heroic deeds, the self-abnegation, of man and woman in the struggle, cannot but excite our admiration, and there is much power of actual description, especially in her account of the little vessel which runs the blockade into Mobile."—*Globe*.

"The author's heart is evidently in her work, and many portions of it are marked by an eloquent earnestness which cannot fail to enlist the sympathy of her readers. No slight amount of artistic feeling also is displayed in it."—*Dispatch*.

"'Macaria' is a remarkable book, and one of undeniable power; full of the impulsive, fiery, demonstrative spirit of the Southern States. Passages of real pathos and sublimity abound in it. The book gives a vivid picture of the self-sacrifice and patriotic devotion which animate the Confederacy."—*Guardian*.

1 vol. post 8vo.

Passages in the Life of an Old Maid.

[Ready.

"Certainly above the average"—*Morning Post*.

"Full of interest and detailed in a lively

natural style."—*Swa*.

"The style of writing is easy, and often amusing."—*Illustrated News*.

In 2 vols. post 8vo.

Uncle Angus.

A NOVEL.

By MARY S. G. NICHOLS.

Author of "Uncle John," "Agnes Morris," &c. [Ready.

"Written in a kindly pleasant tone, the characters are natural and well drawn, and upon the whole there is much to praise and little to find fault with, and it is a book that may with confidence be placed in the hands of youthful readers."

—*Observer*.

"A very pleasant, genial, and clever story. We must leave our readers to become acquainted with it themselves, quite sure that they will not repent the trouble."—*Dispatch*.

"Genial, clever, and interesting."—*Bell's Messenger*.

"The chief merit of this novel lies in the delicate perception of character displayed by the author, and in the skill with which the incidents of the story are

made to develop the peculiarities of the actors. A book which is very charming indeed."—*Morning Post*.

"Glimpses of feeling and indications of character which show what the writer might do."—*Globe*.

"A decidedly amusing novel."—*Reader*.

"A readable and a pleasant book."—*Sunday Times*.

"'Uncle Angus' will be read with pleasure. Mrs. Nichols evidently knows what she is about in novel-writing, and very cleverly contrives to make a good story out of simple materials. There is a great deal of clever portraiture in the book."

"'Uncle Angus' has great interest, and will doubtless be favourably thought of by all by whom it is read."—*Star*.

In 3 vols. post 8vo.

Percy Talbot.

A NOVEL.

By GEORGE GRAHAM.

Author of "Carstone Rectory," &c. [Ready.

"Mr. Graham's style is varied and sparkling yet always clear and perspicuous. His descriptions are easy and pleasing; his characters are well conceived, and all live and breathe. There is a great freshness pervades the entire work, and it possesses a literary merit which will stand a comparison with almost any work of the day. We unhesitatingly recommend the book to our readers, and shall be glad again to encounter its author in a field in which he has already acquitted himself so well, and in which we are prepared to anticipate for him further and more signal triumphs."—*Sunday Times*.

"We have here a powerfully written tale. There is no overcrowding of the canvass, the secondary figures come in as mere accessories to three principal actors in the terrible drama. The mixture of good and evil in 'Percy Talbot' is well chosen."—*John Bull*.

"'Percy Talbot' is a novel that will, we feel certain, find many warm admirers. Mr. Graham has unquestionable talents for making a successful novel-writer, and produces quite a dramatic effect in his descriptive passages. Some of his characters, too, are excellent, both as to

the conception and carrying out, altogether it is a story that will carry away most readers by its somewhat impetuous style and interesting well-sustained plot."

—*Observer*.

"Written with a considerable knowledge of character. The book has great and growing interest, and the attention of the reader is rivetted as he turns over the pages. The dialogue throughout the book is exceedingly well done, and it cannot be doubted that the novel will be a great favourite at all the libraries, and indeed wherever it is read."—*Morning Star*.

"The style is vigorous and well sustained throughout. The principles of this book are unexceptionable, and its literary execution very satisfactory."—*Athenæum*.

"Written in a pleasant style, and with the best intentions. The author never sins against the laws of good manners, and he is evidently well acquainted with the usages of society. He appears to be actuated by strong but kindly feelings, and the book bears the impress of genuine earnestness. It is one which may be safely recommended to families, and it is likely to become a favourite with an immense class."—*London Review*.

THE "ALABAMA."

Now ready, in 2 vols. post 8vo, Second Edition, 24s.

The Cruise of the "Alabama" and the "Sumter."

From the PRIVATE JOURNALS, &c., of CAPTAIN SEMMES, C.S.N., AND OTHER OFFICERS.

With ILLUSTRATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE, &c.
Second Edition.

"They are useful less for the novelty of the information which they convey than for authenticating, summarizing, and methodizing numerous little histories that have long since been notorious."—*Times*.

"The conduct and courage of Captain Semmes in action were worthy of his cause and of his reputation, but the qualities by which he will be hereafter memorable will rather be the judgment with which he executed his plans. Whether that peace for which Captain Semmes sighed during the lonely hours of his cruise comes soon or late, this at least is certain, that the flag under which the 'Alabama' cruised has contributed a memorable episode to the naval history of the world."—*Saturday Review*.

"A simple, straightforward, and most interesting narrative of a successful enterprise, which must always hold a prominent place in the annals of naval warfare."—*Press*.

"Captain Semmes' Journals will do much not only to keep alive the fame of the Alabama in our national records, but

to enable English men to appreciate the character of her daring commander as a true gentleman and patriot, as well as a skilful and dashing sailor. The tale of the gallant "Alabama" will not easily be forgotten in the memory of Englishmen."—*John Bull*.

"We regard the volumes before us, authentic as they may be deemed in the source, as a very useful record of a very memorable episode in naval warfare."—*Globe*.

"An authentic account of the career of Captain Semmes—at least so far as it has been connected with the 'Alabama' and 'Sumter,'—compiled from his private journals and other papers, cannot fail to be read with interest both by friend and foe."—*Dispatch*.

"The name of Captain Semmes has gone forth into all lands wherever printed news can penetrate or the trumpet-tongue of fame is heard. Henceforth the name of Semmes is historic, and "290" is a charmed number."—*Illustrated London News*.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, with Portrait of the Alabama, 6s.

The Log of the Alabama and the Sumter :

Abridged from the Library Edition of "THE CRUISE OF THE ALABAMA." [Ready.

"This volume will be read with great interest. Written in a frank, manly, unaffected style."—*London Review*.

"The Alabama's raid upon the ocean is presented in a moderate sized volume, which will be a favourite one in the library of a man of war."—*Churchman*.

"In absorbing interest this volume is

not surpassed by any contemporaneous publication."—*Sunday Times*.

"We welcome this remarkable narrative in its present handsome and convenient form. It is abridged from the library edition, but nothing essential is omitted, and the circle of its possessors will now be greatly extended."—*Dispatch*.

Also a Cheap Edition in boards, 2s.

[Ready.

In 1 vol. post 8vo. 2s.

Conyers Lea,

Or SKETCHES OF CHARACTER, MILITARY, MAGISTERIAL, AND EPISCOPAL.

By CYRIL THORNTON, M.A.

Cheap Edition.

[Ready.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, 8s. 6d.

The War in America. 1863—64.

By EDWARD POLLARD,

Late Editor of the "Richmond Examiner," now a Prisoner.

[Ready.

"The author has given us the only connected account which we possess of a campaign remarkable for the numbers of those who have perished in its battles."
—*Churchman*.

"The details of the great conflict are very instructive."
—*Observer*.

"The volume contains the best connected account yet published of the Western campaigns from the invasion of Maryland and the battle of Gettysburg, down to the last actions before Petersburg, and of Grant's, Sherman's, and Bank's campaigns in the West and South West."
—*Reader*.

"Those who wish to have a bird's-eye

view of the past year's campaigns cannot do better than peruse this volume."
—*Dispatch*.

"Mr. Pollard's volume takes a wide scope. He writes, indeed chiefly of the war, but he writes as a civilian, and deals with many political matters which had an undoubted if an indirect effect on the campaigns. With all these subjects and very much more, Mr. Pollard's book ably deals with."
—*Standard*.

"Of Mr. Pollard's style it may be said that it is tolerably clear. As a summary of events, however, this volume may be found not entirely useless or unacceptable."
—*Daily News*.

In Foolscep 8vo, with Illustrations, 2s. 6d.

Barefooted Birdie.

A SIMPLE TALE.

By T. O'T.

Edited by CHARLES FELIX, Author of "Velvet Lawn," &c.

[Ready.

"A simple well-told and plaintive little Christmas story, which all may read with pleasure and most with profit."
—*Sunday Times*.

"We cannot recommend a better present than 'Barefooted Birdie,' a simple tale for Christmas."
—*John Bull*.

"We can give this tale our very highest praise."
—*Church Review*.

"The whole story is like a gleam of bright sunshine and summer weather just stealing in upon the cold fogs and winds of Christmas, and telling of brighter days to come in spring and summer, and of brighter seasons still in the far-off golden

land, where 'they need no candle nor light of the sun,' to which 'Birdie' and her little brother Steevie won their happy way."
—*Standard*.

"It is a story such as all little people who rejoice in a book at the chimney corner will find just to their heart's content, and in which older and graver readers will find many a touch of true poetry and pathos. 'Birdie' will be read by many, and must please all who are worth pleasing and care to be pleased. We have had nothing so good since Andersen's 'Little Match Girl,' of whom 'Birdie' reminds us."
—*Herald*.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, 3s. 6d.

The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.,

&c., &c.,

A POLITICAL REVIEW.

By R. MASHEDER, B.A., Author of "Dissent and Democracy."

[Ready.

Vol. III. 8vo, completing the work, 21s.

The History of the Church of England, From the DEATH OF ELIZABETH to the PRESENT TIME.

By the Rev. GEORGE G. PERRY, M.A.

Rector of Waddington, late Fellow and Tutor of Lincoln College.
Oxford. [Ready.

"Written in an easy style, and in a moderate, sensible spirit. Mr. Perry is, apparently, a good Churchman, belonging to no party, and desirous of doing justice to Nonconformists as well as to opposing schools in the Church."—*Reader*.

"A most useful and ably written work. The spirit in which the whole question of Church history is treated is highly creditable to the author, and throughout exhibits liberal, enlightened, and tolerant views."—*Observer*.

"The whole makes a pleasant and readable history of the period chronicled. Mr. Perry manifests a desire to maintain

the sound doctrine and discipline of the Church."—*English Churchman*.

"Our author never shirks any portion of work which fairly belongs to him; and above all, he has no bias but for the broad plain truth. Mr. Perry's work must take its place as the companion of Southey and Short, not only in the Library of every theological student, but every reader of history."—*Herald*.

"This valuable and important work is now complete, and Mr. Perry has the honour of filling up what has long been wanting in our ecclesiastical literature."—*Clerical Journal*.

1 vol. post 8vo, illustrated, 12s.

Hunting Tours,

By "CECIL."

[Ready.

"The book is a contribution to the subject which has long been wanted, and which reflects the greatest credit upon the author for his composition, and the publishers for their discrimination in bringing it before the public in its present attractive form."—*Sporting Gazette*.

"'Hunting Tours' will afford interest and amusement to all classes of readers. The work is admirably illustrated by E. Corbet, and beautifully got up both as to type and binding."—*Sporting Review*.

"There is scarcely any topic connected with the hunting field which is not treated with fulness and force, in 'Cecil's' picturesque and animated sketches."—*Morning Post*.

"'Cecil' has performed the task he undertook with ability and zeal, and his 'Hunting Tours' should be found on the library table of every sporting man."—*Sun*.

"A volume which cannot fail to prove of much interest to sportsmen, and we commend it to their especial attention."—*Oxford Journal*.

"Contains an immense amount of valuable information, such as only a veteran fox hunter of the first order could supply. 'Cecil's' pseudonym suffices to guarantee the excellence of his book."—*Press*.

"Written with a masterly knowledge of its subject * * * 'Cecil' writes like a gentleman: there is much that is very exciting and interesting in his book."—*Daily News*.

"Gives particulars respecting the various packs with which the author has hunted, narrates the fortunes of their several masters or whips, and chronicles here and there the particulars of a remarkably successful run."—*Sunday Times*.

In 8vo. price 10s. 6d., Second Edition.

The Cotton Trade:

Its Bearing upon the Prosperity of Great Britain and Commerce of the American Republics considered in Connection with the System of Negro Slavery in the Confederate States.

By GEORGE MCHENRY.

[Ready.

"Contains a mass of information on most matters at all involved in the origin

of the disruption among the whilom United States."—*Glasgow Courier*.

In 1 vol. 8vo. 18s.

The History of the Cotton Famine, FROM THE FALL OF SUMTER TO THE PASSING OF THE PUBLIC WORKS ACT.

By R. ARTHUR ARNOLD.

[Ready.

"Mr. Arnold's 600 pages are filled with facts and figures arranged in a lucid popular style, and from the great and permanent importance of the subject will be read with interest."—*Times*.

"The story of the cotton famine, as told by Mr. Arnold, has all the interest of a romance; the statistics, the figures, the reports of Mr. Farnall, the weekly returns of the Board of Guardians, are all so many threads of interest in the story. The book is well put together, carefully, and with a fairness and candour which entitle the author to high praise."—*Athenæum*.

"It traces in a clear and succinct manner the steps which were taken to meet a national calamity, as soon as the prospects of the cotton supply became darkened."—*Observer*.

"Mr. Arnold has put together all the facts with lucid minuteness, and enabled

his readers to recall all the details of a struggle which reflected honour on British administration."—*Spectator*.

"We acknowledge the substantial merits of Mr. Arnold's work. He discusses with fairness, with temper, and we think with substantial justice, the various question which arose and became matter of controversy during the famine."—*London Review*.

"We congratulate Mr. Arnold on his having added a very valuable contribution to contemporary history. He has evidently bestowed very considerable pains in the collection of his facts, and arranged them in lucid order. His narrative has the merit of fidelity and of being free from partiality. It is complete in statement, and will always remain a standard book of reference with regard to the highly interesting events which it records."—*Herald*.

Also a New and Cheaper Edition, 1 vol. post 8vo., 5s. 6d.

[Ready.

"Contains much valuable information."—*Star*.

"A valuable and comprehensive work."—*Dispatch*.

"These authentic records are most in-

teresting, exhibiting as they do the unparalleled success which attended the proceedings adopted to meet what at one time threatened to become an overwhelming calamity."—*Observer*.

In 1 vol. post 8vo, Second Edition, 6s.

The Danes in Camp : LETTERS FROM SÖNDERBÖRG.

By the Honourable AUBERON HERBERT. [Ready.

"This is a pleasantly written book, because it is exactly what it professes to be. Mr. Herbert's book is satisfactory to read, because it presents so strange a contrast to the average of the literary class to which he belongs. Its merit is that it is written because its author wishes to tell what he has seen and felt, and not because he wishes to produce an article that will sell. There are many lively and striking passages."—*Saturday Review*.

"The letters are well and gracefully written; they teem with interesting incidents and narrations; there is about them an air of probity, which instantly impresses the reader with the conviction that they contain only the truth; and all

this is mingled with a good humour and moderation that win our confidence and deserve our respect."—*Daily News*.

"Mr. Herbert is an agreeable, manly writer, and English readers will respond gratefully to the generous sympathy and admiration which he expresses for the inhabitants of the little kingdom."—*Athenæum*.

"These interesting letters are dedicated to the writer's mother, the Countess Dowager of Carnarvon. They place the events of the siege graphically before the reader, in simple but forcible language. All that Mr. Herbert says claims our most careful attention."—*Reader*.

The Kennel Stud Book.

Edited by "CECIL."

[In preparation.

In 3 vols. post 8vo.

Velvet Lawn.

A NOVEL.

By CHARLES FELIX, Author of "The Notting Hill Mystery."

[Ready.

"Strong and pervading interest there unquestionably is in the story."—*Observer*.

"A straightforward and workmanlike story, fairly interesting throughout. Mr. Felix is evidently a man of ability."—*Reader*.

"Such as admire an elaborately contrived plot, detailed in a fluent and easy style, will derive much pleasure from the perusal of the tale."—*Dispatch*.

"In character as well as incident, 'Velvet Lawn' is singularly rich, and it will unquestionably be a very popular novel."—*Press*.

"The plot appears to us to be original,

and is certainly remarkable for its ingenuity."—*Athenæum*.

"The plot of 'Velvet Lawn' is exceedingly well conceived, and the interest never flags."—*Index*.

"It will find many readers, having attractions for the more thoughtful as well as the mere devourers of sensationalism."—*Herald*.

"There is a story, and that story is well told, so that it will command many readers."—*Globe*.

"It rises far above the ordinary run of novels."—*Daily News*.

In 1 large vol. 8vo, the Second Edition, price 21s.

Australian Explorations.

JOHN McDOWALL STUART'S JOURNALS OF EXPLORATIONS IN AUSTRALIA from 1858 to 1862.

Edited by WILLIAM HARDMAN, M.A., F.R.G.S., &c.

Illustrated with a Portrait of the author, and 12 page Engravings on Wood, drawn by George French Angas, from Sketches taken during the Expedition, and accompanied by a carefully-prepared Map of the Explorer's Route across the entire Continent.

[Ready.

"A very large and valuable addition to our geographical knowledge of Australia."—*Observer*.

"Worthy of being ranked amongst the most important in the History of Australian discovery."—*Morning Advertiser*.

"To dilate on the value of the work to the very large number who are directly or indirectly interested in Australian progress is superfluous."—*Dispatch*.

"It is impossible to refrain from the strongest admiration of the narrative, given in his own Journal, in which so much unpretending unconscious heroism is evinced, such simple devotion to the end of his enterprise; thankfulness, not self-laudation at its accomplishment, hold-

ing his life so lightly so that his duty might be done."—*Globe*.

"These journals abound in interesting information, and have a special charm as living records of what the discoverer has seen and done."—*Examiner*.

"We can commend the book to the careful perusal of those who wish to appreciate something of the future of Australia."—*Morning Star*.

"The conductor of the expedition has earned lasting fame for the sterling qualities which he proved himself to possess. Throughout the toilsome journeys, of which he has given a minute and graphic account, he evinced every qualification which should characterise the leader such expeditions."—*Morning Post*.

In 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Shakspeare Weighed in an Even Balance.

By the Rev. ALFRED POWNALL, M.A.,

Vicar of Trowse Newton and Fakenham, late Crosse's Theological Scholar, Cambridge, &c.

[Ready

In 2 vols. post 8vo.

Mr. Christopher Katydid (of Casconia).

A TALE.

Edited by MARK HEYWOOD.

[Ready.

"There are marks of cleverness in this tale. The author gives evidence of ability."—*Athenæum*.

"The reader may derive much entertainment from a series of clever sketches relating to persons, customs, and scenery, partly American, partly English."—*Observer*.

"Quaint in construction and singular in manner, may be taken as a true definition of this American story; the plot is amusing."—*Bell's Messenger*.

"There are some pleasant descriptions of country scenery, and the story is very amusing."—*Star*.

"Reveals to us some new and curious habits of life."—*Daily News*.

"The work has merits, and is not undeserving of perusal. It is a thoroughly trans-Atlantic tale, and the heroes and heroines whom it describes are refreshingly different from those of our native romance."—*London Review*.

1 vol. post 8vo. 5s.

Why Paul Ferroll Killed his Wife.

By the Author of "PAUL FERROLL." Fourth Edition. [Ready.

1 vol. small 8vo, antique, 7s. 6d.

Sermons,

By the late Rev. C. T. ERSKINE, M.A.

Incumbent of St. Michael's, Wakefield. With a Memoir of his Life, and a preface by the Bishop of Brechin. [Ready.

"The Sermons are far above the average of such compositions, and in many parts they are remarkable for the originality of thought which they possess. A devout and reverent spirit, moreover, pervades every sermon."—*Observer*.

"Mr. Erskine's Sermons are thirty-one in number, and they are all interesting."—*Clerical Journal*.

"A work of absorbing interest, and one which none can well read without feeling infinitely the better for it. The volume is got up with singular neatness."—*Church Review*.

"Mr. Erskine's style is vigorous and thoughtful."—*Literary Churchman*.

"These Sermons will be treasured by many, and pondered over by many, who knew the sterling excellence of him by whom they were written and preached. The memoir of his life has evidently been a labour of love, and affectionately depicts a character which no one can study without deriving benefit from it."—*Scottish Guardian*.

"The fervour, simplicity, and faith evinced in these discourses are worthy of the best age."—*Globe*.

"Of Mr. Erskine's Sermons we can hardly speak in too high terms. Calm, thoughtful, mild, and yet austere, they are instinct with Catholic truth and Catholic faith."—*Churchman*.

Second and revised edition, post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

The Gouty Philosopher;

Or, THE OPINIONS, WHIMS, AND ECCENTRICITIES OF JOHN WAGSTAFFE, ESQ., OF WILBYE GRANGE.

By CHARLES MACKAY.

[Ready.

In Foolscape 8vo, 2s. 6d.

The Alchymist :

PARABLES IN RHYME.

By Capt. C. N. TUCKER, late Bengal Cavalry. [Ready.

"Much above the average of little books of this class, for it is free from gross faults of any kind."—*Spectator*.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED.

ARNOLD—THE MARQUESS OF DALHOUSIE'S ADMINISTRATION OF BRITISH INDIA. By EDWIN ARNOLD, M.A., late Principal of Poona College, and Fellow of the University of Bombay. Vol. I., containing the Acquisition and Administration of the Punjab. 8vo, 15s.

BROMLEY—A WOMAN'S WANDERINGS IN THE WESTERN WORLD. A Series of Letters addressed to Sir Fitzroy Kelly, M.P. By his Daughter, Mrs. BROMLEY. 1 vol., post 8vo, with Illustrations, 10s. 6d.

DENISON—REMARKS ON ESSAYS AND REVIEWS. By Sir WILLIAM DENISON, K.C.B., F.R.S., F.A.S., Colonel Royal Engineers. 8vo, 1s. 6d.

FAITH AND PEACE,

Being Answers to Essays and Reviews. By Several Writers, with a Preface by the Venerable Archdeacon Denison. 1 vol., 8vo, 12s.

FONBLANQUE—NIPHON AND PE-CHE-LI; Or, Two Years in Japan and Northern China. By EDWARD BARRINGTON DE FONBLANQUE, Assistant Commissary-General. 1 vol. 8vo. with Illustrations, 21s.

HANDBOOK OF TURNING,

Containing Instructions in Concentric, Elliptic, and Eccentric Turning; also various Plates of Chucks, Tools, &c., and a Portrait of the author done in the Lathe. A New Edition, fcp. 8vo, 7s. 6d.

GODKIN—EDUCATION IN IRELAND.

Its History, Institutions, Systems, Statistics, and Progress, from the Earliest Times to the Present. By JAMES GODKIN. 8vo, 7s. 6d.

HARTLEY—A HANDY BOOK FOR RIFLE

VOLUNTEERS; or, a Compendium of Instruction for Drill and the Rifle, according to the most Recent Regulations. Arranged systematically and specially adapted to the Progressive Improvement of the Volunteer in Every Stage. By Captain W. G. HARTLEY. 1 vol., fcap. 8vo, 7s. 6d.

HUGHES—BIBLIOLATRY, AN ESSAY.

By the Rev. JAMES HUGHES, M.A. 1 vol., fcap. 8vo, 2s. 6d.

JOYCE—ECCLESIA VINDICATA,

A Treatise on Appeals in Matters Spiritual. By JAMES MAYLAND JOYCE, M.A., author of a "Constitutional History of the Convocation of the Clergy," &c. 1 vol., fcp. 8vo, 5s. 6d.

LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS,

With Illustrative Poetry; to which are now added the Calendar of Flowers, and the Dial of Flowers. Thirteenth edition, 1 vol., fcp. 8vo, with coloured Plates, 7s. 6d.

LAURIE—NORTHERN EUROPE

(Denmark, Sweden, Russia), Local, Social, and Political. By Captain W. F. B. LAURIE, late Commissary of Ordnance, Nagpore Force. 1 vol., 8vo.

LECTURES ON THE MOUNTAINS;

Or, the Highlands and Highlanders as they were and as they are. 2 vols., fcap. 8vo, 10s.

LEE—ON MIRACLES.

An Examination of the Remarks "On the Study of the Evidences of Christianity," in "Essays and Reviews." By WILLIAM LEE, D.D. 1 vol., 8vo, 5s.

MACKAY—THE GOUTY PHILOSOPHER;

Or, the Opinions, Whims, and Eccentricities of John Wagstaffe, Esq., of Wilbye Grange. By CHAS. MACKAY. 1 vol., post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

NEALE—ESSAYS ON LITURGOLOGY AND

CHURCH HISTORY. By the Rev. J. M. NEALE, D.D. 1 vol., 8vo, 18s.

NORTHCOTE—TWENTY YEARS OF FI-

NANCIAL POLICY. A Summary of the Chief Financial Measures passed between 1842 and 1861, with a Table of Budgets. By Sir STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE, Bart., M.P., 1 vol., 8vo, 14s.

ONGARA—BARON RICASOLI,

Prime Minister of Italy. A Biography. From the Italian of F. DALL' ONGARA. 1 vol., fcap. 8vo, 3s. 6d.

PERRY—THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

OF ENGLAND FROM THE DEATH OF ELIZABETH TO THE PRESENT TIME. By the Rev. G. G. PERRY, M.A. In 3 vols., 8vo, price 21s. each.

RECOLLECTIONS OF GENERAL GARIBALDI;

Or, Travels from Rome to Lucerne, comprising a Visit to the Mediterranean, Isles of La Maddelena and Caprera, and General Garibaldi's Home. 1 vol., post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

ROBERTS—AN AUTUMN TOUR IN SPAIN,

IN THE YEAR 1859. By the Rev. RICHARD ROBERTS, B.A. 1 vol., 8vo, with Illustrations, 21s.

STEPHEN—ADVENTURES OF A GENTLE-

MAN IN SEARCH OF A HORSE. By Sir GEORGE STEPHEN, with Illustrations by George Cruikshank. New and Cheaper Edition. 1 vol., post 8vo, 5s.

TORRENS—THE LIFE AND TIMES OF

THE RIGHT HON. SIR JAMES R. G. GRAHAM, Bart., G.C.B., M.P. By TORRENS McCULLAGH TORRENS, late M.P., Author of the "Life of Sheil," &c. 2 vols., 8vo, price 16s. each.

TRAVELS IN LADAK, TAR-

TARY, AND KASHMIR. By Lieut.-Col. TORRENS, 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Second Edition, 1 vol., 8vo, beautifully illustrated. 28s.

VERNEY—THE SHANNON'S BRIGADE IN INDIA. Being some account of Sir William Peel's Naval Brigade in the Indian Campaign of 1857—1858. By EDMUND HOPE VERNEY, Lieut., R.N. 1 vol., large 8vo, 7s. 6d.

WOLFF—TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES OF THE REV. JOSEPH WOLFF, late Missionary to the Jews and Mahomedans in Persia, Bokhara, Cashmere, &c. Cheaper Edition. 1 vol., 8vo, 12s.

WOODGATE—SERMONS ON THE SUNDAY HISTORICAL LESSONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT Throughout the Year. By H. A. WOODGATE, B.D. 2 vols., 15s.

FICTION.

CHARLEY NUGENT ;

Or, Passages in the Life of a Sub. 3 vols., post 8vo, 31s. 6d.

CLINTON MAYNYARD.

A Tale of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. 1 vol., post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

CONSTANCE MORDAUNT ;

Or, Life in the Western Archipelago. 2 vols., post 8vo, 21s.

GERTRUDE MELTON ;

Or, Nature's Nobleman. 1 vol., post 8vo, 7s. 6d.

HAROLD OVERDON, ASHORE & AFLOAT.

By CHARTLEY CASTLE, Author of "John Woodburn." 1 vol., post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

LEILA MARSTON.

A Tale. By SYDNEY ELLIS. 1 vol., post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

NORTHUMBRIAN ABBOTS.

A Tale of the Seventh Century. By R. B. WERBORTON. 1 vol., fcp. 8vo, 5s.

OLD ROMAN WELL.

A Romance of Dark Streets and Green Lanes. 2 vols., post 8vo, 21s.

RECOLLECTIONS of a COUNTRY CLERGYMAN. 1 vol., post 8vo, 5s.

SKELETON IN THE CUPBOARD.

By LADY SCOTT. Cheap Edition. Post 8vo, 5s.

VICAR OF LYSSEL.

A Clergyman's Diary of 1729—82. Small 8vo, 4s. 6d.

WHY PAUL FERROLL KILLED HIS WIFE.

By the Author of "Paul Ferroll." 4th Edition, 1 vol., post 8vo, 5s.

WILLIE ATHERTON.

A Tale. By GEORGE HERBERT. 1 vol., post 8vo, 10s. 6d.

And other Poems. By STEWART LOCKYER, A
Bartholomew's Day." 4s.

FRIENDSHIP,

And other Poems. By HIBERNICUS. 5s.

ITALIAN LYRICS,

And other Poems. 3s.

JUDITH,

And other Poems. By FRANCIS MILLS, M.R.C.S.

MATILDA OF NORMANDY,

A Poetical Tribute to the Imperial Academy of Cae
CAREY. 2s.

NUPTIALS OF BARCELONA,

A Tale of Priestly Frailty and Spanish Tyranny.

POEMS.

By the Author of "Paul Ferroll." Including a New
Poems by V. 1 vol., fcp. 8vo, 7s. 6d.

PARISH HYMN BOOK.

Edited by the Rev. H. W. Beadon, the Rev. Grevi
and the Rev. James Russell Woodford. Price 8d. ar

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE PAST.

SACRED POEMS.

By the late Right Hon. Sir ROBERT GRANT, a New
a Notice by Lord Glenelg. 5s.

SATAN RESTORED.

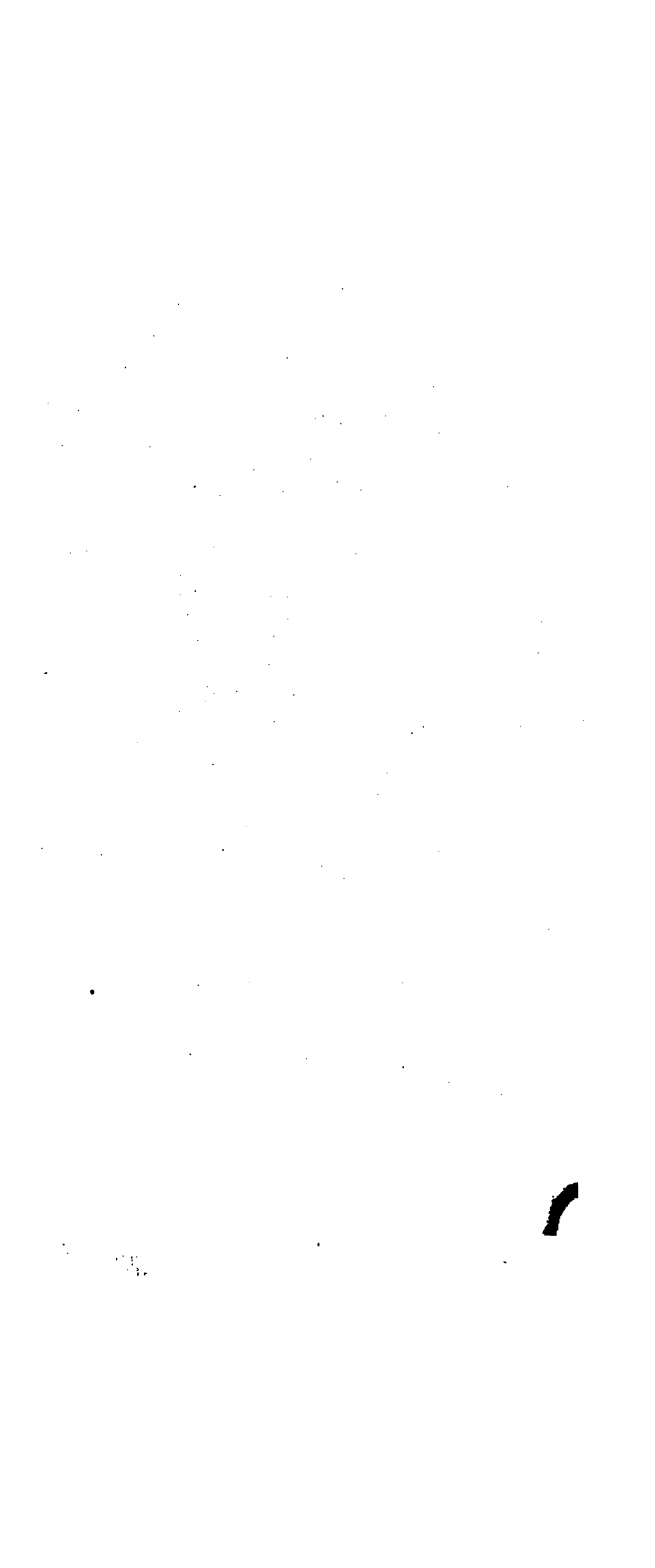
By W. CYPLES. 6s.

SHADOW OF THE YEW.

By NORMAN B. YONGE.

STILL SMALL VOICE.

A Poem in Four Cantos By NORMAN B. YONGE







3 6105 004 442 419

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
CECIL H. GREEN LIBRARY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305-6004
(415) 723-1493

All books may be recalled after 7 days

DATE DUE

